Edited by
Juliet Hacking &
Joanne Lukitsh

PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE ARTS

Essays on
19th Century
Practices
and Debates

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Photography and the Arts

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Essays on Nineteenth-Century Practices and Debates

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Introduction

Juliet Hacking and Joanne Lukitsh

The essays in this anthology redraw established lines of scholarly enquiry into nineteenth-century artistic photography, examining the material and metaphorical interplay between photography and the arts, with 'arts' encompassing a range of media from the visual culture of the time. The arguments advanced in the essays ground the complex exchanges between photography and the fine, graphic and sculptural arts in their material and social contexts, and elucidate how the aesthetic debates that attended to these exchanges were informed by, and spoke to, a range of issues pertaining to science, manufacture, class identities and social aspiration, national identity and imperialism. The photographs illustrated in this volume were encountered on the pages of portfolios, albums and books, viewed on the walls of museums and art galleries, displayed in shop windows, and/or handed from one person to another in meetings of learned societies or photographic organizations. *Photography and the Arts: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Practices and Debates* claims a significance for historical interactions between photography and the arts beyond matters of cultural status, judgements of quality or taxonomy.

The title *Photography and the Arts* is a reworking of Aaron Scharf's 1968 *Art and Photography*. Our title both honours what is arguably the best-known English language text on this subject area and insists upon the difference between its intellectual moment and that of the present.[1] Scharf, in charting the interplay between art and photography (mainly European with some American) in terms of new formal possibilities, cleaved to the modernist idea that 'art' equalled 'painting'. Any cultural recognition due to nineteenth-century photography would be as the agent of painting's renewal. Based on his doctoral thesis undertaken at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, Scharf's text was an example of the incipient assimilation of photography into the European and Anglophone academy in the late 1960s, when the gradual and fitful accumulation of cultural capital to photography, owing predominantly to institutional collecting, exhibitions and publications, began to accelerate. This uplift in photography's place in the attention economy of the Western art world mushroomed, in the mid-1970s, into the phenomenon known as the Photo Boom: a proliferation of specialist formations such as museum departments, commercial galleries, art journals, fair and festivals, publishing imprints and prizes, and of the professional roles that these generated.[2] Fifty years on from Scharf's text, photography is firmly entrenched in the Western art world and its academe.

Already by 1968, the date of the publication of Scharf's book, photography was emerging as central to an incipient paradigm shift, predominantly in the United States and Europe, away from modernism in the visual arts, first in terms of contemporary art practice and later in terms of theory and historiography. Artists critical of the modernist conception of high art, and its commodification by the art market, turned to mass media imagery (including advertising, celebrity and reportage photography) and popular visual culture (including amateur photography) to draw attention to its strictures and exclusions. Artistic and critical attention paid to the ideological freighting of photographs used as objective evidence and as neutral records generated further enquiry into contemporary and historical practices of photography. In the late 1970s and 1980s scholars associated with the New York-based journal *October* critiqued the reduction of 'the formerly plural field of photography' (i.e. images produced for 'information, documentation, evidence, illustration, reportage') into an 'all-encompassing *aesthetic*'.[3] This aesthetic was, predominantly, that advanced by curator John Szarkowski's influential publications and exhibitions of contemporary and historical photographs at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Szarkowski asserted that a specifically photographic 'way of seeing' was at work in *all* photographs: both those made for or used for instrumental purposes and those made and/or displayed for aesthetic ends.[4] This institutionally endorsed aesthetic, with its narrow lexicon of creative photographic expression, drew down on medium specificity, the late modernist trope that conceptualized painting and sculpture in terms of (a constructed) essentialism.

Crucial to the centrality of photography in general, and early photography in particular, to the *October* project was the currency that accrued to the writings of the Frankfurt School cultural critic, Walter Benjamin, after their revival in the 1970s by left-wing scholars and artists critical of modernism. For Benjamin, the art claims of photography made in the nineteenth century were a symptom of its commercialization in the late 1850s, when these claims were a means to fetishize the commercial photographer's services and wares.[5] His theorization of early images, such as those made by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson in the 1840s, in terms of a 'tiny spark of contingency' that resisted subsumption into art, signalled the critical possibilities of the subject of nineteenth-century photography. As was argued by the *October* scholars, particularly Abigail Solomon-Godeau, the production of artistic biographies for photographers, artistic pedigrees for their works and formal readings of their imagery engendered a modernist history of art photography that overwrote the specific nineteenth-century networks in which these photographs had circulated.[6] The art historicization of nineteenth-century photographs saw them gain in cultural status and monetary value but at the cost of their multivalent significance at the time of their making. The *October* school were identified as scholarly contextualists, reclaiming social and sometimes political currency for photographs now subject to the connoisseurial imperatives of art museum display.

The essays in this volume identify the invocation of aesthetics in relation to photography as a historical component of particular social and political conditions. Illuminating these coded cultural interventions requires the historical specificity and intellectual rigour that is necessary for authoritative knowledge production, critical thinking and skilled argument. The essays are, we believe, exemplary in this regard.

Before summarizing their subjects, arguments and approaches, we will first elucidate the dominant methodologies and theoretical framings that inform recent cultural theorizations of the plurality of nineteenth-century practices today characterized as 'the photographic'.

Recent theorizations of photographic meaning in the European and American sciences, social sciences, and literature have reframed narratives of nineteenth-century photography beyond that of a quest for artistic legitimacy.[7] Beginning in the late 1990s, situating nineteenth-century photographs in relation to contemporary epistemological, scientific and philosophical paradigms has become a scholarly imperative, as has an insistence on the interdependence of these paradigms with ideas of physiological and aesthetic vision. In *Burning with Desire: Conceptions of Photography* (1997) Geoffrey Batchen attended to the social and cultural emergence of photography through discourses of photochemical experimentation dating to the Romantic period. In *Objectivity* (2007), a major work in the history of science, Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison identified their subject not as a universal desideratum, but as a specific methodological approach that gained scientific authority in the nineteenth century and was substantially entangled with philosophical and psychological issues of selfhood.[8] The authors, a historian and a philosopher of science respectively, made their claims by reference to the graphic, and sometimes photographic, illustrations of empirical data in scientific compendia. Jennifer Tucker, also a historian of science, analysed photography's emergence as a major component of scientific investigation in *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (2005), in which she argued that photography did not appear fully formed as an objective evidential mode.[9] Instead, because it was seemingly unburdened by the perceived subjective freighting of contemporary scientific writing, objectivity was manufactured for it. Owing to the insights of Galison, Daston, Tucker and other scholars, it is no longer tenable to read the mechanical operations of the camera against the subjectivity and artistic agency of the photographer.

Another strand within this scientific turn is the reinsertion of canonical photographic practices into the scientific networks and discourses from which they had been excised in order to claim them for art. Exemplary here is *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (2013), an anthology of essays that grounds Talbot's photographic research within the multiple fields of scholarly enquiry with which he was involved.[10] Similarly significant are those accounts which overturn the modernist polarization of empirical and aesthetic imperatives and instead trace their interactions. In *Singular Images, Failed Copies: William Henry Fox Talbot and the Early Photograph* (2015), Vered Maimon argues for the recognition that these imperatives were conjoined by a wider epistemological paradigm in which, for example, imagination played a determining, and legitimate, role in science.[11] Maimon argues that the creation of permanent renderings of what was seen in the camera obscura did not result in unmediated autogenetic reproductions. Instead, these images created a discrete visual mode inflected by time, in particular, the temporal duration of the exposure. The recent pictorial turn in the sciences and the scientific turn in photographic discourse are corollaries, evidence of a wider epistemological shift towards a rapprochement of the quantitative and the qualitative.

Jennifer Tucker's assertion that, in relation to British science, 'photographs were the result of labour that was divided by gender and stratified by class' insists upon

the photographic object as resonant with the social meanings of its production, display, circulation and reception.[12] How petit-bourgeois male workers in the British photographic industries encoded their desires for social, political and aesthetic agency in the attempts to have photography recognized as evincing creative labour has been the subject of extensive study.[13] More recently, cultural historians have identified the commercial, scientific and artistic activities of women photographers (both amateur and commercial) and those employed within emerging industries of photography in France and Britain, through research that tracks, often in a nonlinear way, the traces of their photographic activity in overlooked objects and records.[14] In these accounts, social biography is newly invigorated as an approach that allows for individual lives to intersect with, act upon and illuminate the wider economic, political and social conditions of their historical moment.[15]

The claim that the photographic was implicated in questions of labour and enfranchisement in the nineteenth century has been central to two studies of 'composition photography' (photographic tableaux printed from two or more negatives). For the literature scholar Daniel A. Novak, the photographic fragments or studies made for assembly in the darkroom were interchangeable and, as such, akin to the ideal of faceless labour (abstracted labour value) under capitalism.[16] Photographic historian Jordan Bear has recently proposed that 'a primary feature of the development of modern society was the dramatic expansion of an audience empowered to judge the reliability of its own visual experience'.[17] Identifying the social agency at work in tracing the manipulations involved in visual trickery with a growing political consciousness, Bear claims what he calls 'visual discernment' as 'the preferred metaphor in the […] most consequential – and antagonistic – politics of the 1850s. Indeed, it became the key for mediating the individual's agency and his place in the community'.[18] According to Sarah M. Miller, Bear's account serves to 'dislodg[e] the modernist history of photography that valorised objectivity as its patrimony'.[19]

With photography no longer to be read as exemplary of scientific facticity, or in terms of the ambition to make a creative instrument out of a machine, the entanglement of the idea of photography with other subjectives processes and symbolic forms is a newly invigorated area of scholarly study. A significant cross-disciplinary strand of research by literary scholars theorizes how ideas of the photographic informed English-language fiction in the nineteenth century. In his study attending to literary realism, Novak, like his scientific counterparts, broke with the idea of photography as symbolic of a new empirical order and instead attended to its claims upon the grotesque and the typological;[20] according to his analysis, 'both photographic "realism" and Victorian realist fiction produce and depend upon the effacement of particularity'.[21] Other accounts attend to photography's structuring role as regards literary devices (or mental processes that were deployed as such); notable here are Caroline Levine's study of suspense, Helen Groth's of nostalgia and Jennifer Green-Lewis's of memory.[22] These studies reinstate the more arbitrary processes of subjectivity and cognition lost in valourizations of technological objectivity in much twentieth-century cultural writing on nineteenth-century photography. Like these literary studies, cross-disciplinary examinations of photography's embeddedness with 'other media' and their histories, from communications (e.g. telegraphy and news

media) to cultural forms (e.g. graphic arts and cinema), have further 'dislodged' what scholar Stephen Bann decried as the 'tunnel histories' provided by early accounts of nineteenth-century photography: histories that hardly look beyond the subject of photography to explain photography.[23]

Bann has coined the phrase 'photographic exceptionalism' to describe the modernist privileging of photography's place in nineteenth-century visual culture.[24] Examining photography in relation to sculpture, according to Patrizia Di Bello, situated them both, 'as others to the putative singularity of the work of art as formulated in the artistic discourses privileging painting that have dominated Europe and America and their spheres of influence'.[25] The attention now being paid to practices previously excluded from or marginalized within accounts of nineteenth-century photography has substantially widened the parameters of photographic discourse. Recent studies of the metropolitan entertainments in which photography was imbricated, notably the illusionism of theatrical staging and of the displays by street entertainers in the metropolis, drawing upon both experimental and popular science, have further demonstrated the porous nature of the arts and sciences in the period.[26] Historical study of domestic photograph albums compiled in the nineteenth century by upper- and middle-class women, often featuring mixed media photo-collages, has contributed to the revision of conventional notions of the nature of photographic creativity, including its persistent gendering as masculine.[27] This form of 'playing with pictures',[28] together with the manipulations of 'composition photography', claims mutability, performativity, oneiric states and fantasy as among the key creative possibilities of photography and has further destabilized the view that the indexicality generally ascribed to photographic representation in twentieth-century theorizations necessarily governs photographic signification.[29] Scholars in the Global North have increasingly attended to the specificity, and theorization, of practices and debates arising from the South, notably the postcolonies, and their implications for established theoretical and methodological paradigms. Particularly significant for overturning the persistent Anglophone identification of indexical and Foucauldian models for photographic meanings is Christopher Pinney's reading of photography from India as both indexical *and* performative.[30]

In an early twenty-first-century moment of intense transformation in the digital production and circulation of images, the term 'materiality' invokes the digital and social as components of the historical interpretation of photographic meaning. Elizabeth Edwards's writings have been seminal for the strand of the materialist project that situates photographs within specifics of circulation, dissemination and psychical entrenchment. This approach challenges the dominance of theorizations of signification and semiotics by restoring the photograph's currency and affect.[31] A different dimension of the meaning of 'materiality' concerns the contemporary status of the photograph as object in light of the massive cultural shift to digital – smartphones, digital cameras and new 'ecology' of images online.[32] Today the theorization of the digital in photographic studies is less about an epistemic rupture with a previous analogue era and more about the implications of algorithmical reading and mining of data from images online for the 'surveillance capitalism' that defines our particular historical moment.[33] Another, emerging, aspect of 'materiality' concerns the crisis of global warming; presumptions

of the inexhaustible availability of natural resources are now understood in a new frame, that of their embeddedness in an ideology not of progress but of unconstrained exploitation.[34]

In 1859 Charles Baudelaire wrote of 'the ill-applied developments of photography' which 'like all other purely material developments of progress have contributed much to the impoverishment of French artistic genius'.[35] This polarization of photography and imagination saw Baudelaire propose that photography 'return to its true duty, which is to be the servant of the sciences and the arts–but the very humble servant, like printing or shorthand, which have neither created nor supplemented literature'.[36] Baudelaire's equation of photographic knowledge with the clerical class was disparaging to both, nonetheless he characterizes this lowly photographic labour as important: 'Let it [photography] rescue from oblivion those tumbling ruins, those books, prints, and manuscripts which time is devouring, precious things whose form is dissolving and which demand a place in the archives of our memory.'[37] Baudelaire's vision of the promised capacity of photography to preserve things for human memory, to intervene in the passage of time, is contemporaneous with the emergence of the wet-collodion negative, printed onto albumen or salt paper. Albumen paper is conventionally connected to the industrial scale production of stereograph cards and carte-de-visite photographs, and therefore to the emergence of photography as a component of a European and American spectacular modernity and consumerism. But Baudelaire's projections of the infinite numbers of prints which could be made from a single negative were exactly that: projections. The role he envisioned for photographs as a bulwark against the ruptures of modernization was unconstrained by the physical limitations of fading photographic prints and broken glass negatives.

As scholars have only recently noted, there is ample evidence of a recognition in the nineteenth century of photography's insufficiency in relation to the novel powers claimed for it.[38] This was also true, we would say, of the fantasies, such as Baudelaire's, of photography as an infallible reproductive process. Jennifer Green-Lewis has written of the need for 'wider conversation … that attends to the technical realities of photography, including the limitations, innovations, and commercial pressures of specific historic moments and photographic "networks"'.[39] The nineteenth-century photograph was not a standardized commodity: to take just one example, few steps in the manufacture of albumen paper were mechanized.[40] Countering 'photographic exceptionalism' means reconsidering now canonical contemporary texts and statements concerned with photography as an (immaterial) epiphenomenon of modernity and modernization in conjunction with the significance of material objects and practices in the production of photographic meanings.

Today, with vastly increased access to knowledge and objects via notionally immaterial digital resources, the interplay of the material and the immaterial is a determining feature of our contemporary moment and historical method. The essays in this volume argue for the recognition of the symbiotic nature of material manifestations with immaterial conceptions of photography rather than situating them as proper to, respectively, micro- and macro-level analysis. The mutability at stake in the physical production of photographs during this period here comes to the fore, as does the mutability of the photographic image when subject to reception,

circulation, acquisition and preservation. The mapping of material formations and the multiple networks to which they belonged enables us to reconstruct the significant, but sometimes intangible, exchanges to which these gave rise. Scholarship which traces the appearance of photographs in more than one discursive realm, such as their circulation between private individuals and between institutions, by hand, by post and by steam packet, further undermines the credibility of the idea that nineteenth-century photographs ever evinced fixed meanings.[41]

The title of this anthology does not specify a geographic qualifier. This is not to universalize the predominantly Western European, British colonial (and, to a lesser extent) American scenarios, practices and discourse that the essays present. The imperatives of industrial capitalism, giving rise to, in the sphere of visual culture, cheaper modes of dissemination of textual and visual imagery, are always in tension with specific national formations (such as political discourse, scientific research, government patronage of the arts and arts education) and with more metropolitan formations (such as the display, and sale, of historical and contemporary art). The historical specificity of the case studies presented here is the basis of their broader significance: their rigorous historical method is the standard by which to judge their findings and interpretations. Other important contributions made by this volume include the bringing together of canonical 'art' practices with research attending to science, manufacture and popular imagery. The self-avowed artistic endeavours of British figures such as Hill and Adamson, Henry Peach Robinson, Julia Margaret Cameron, Peter Henry Emerson and George Davison may have come to our attention owing to the Anglo-American modernist project but our rejection of the latter does not inevitably lead to rejection of the former; nor does it mean that these individuals and their practices cannot be discussed in the same frame as chemical experimentation of the Imprimerie photographique in Lille or the undercurrent of violence in tourist imagery of the British Raj.[42] The interplay between photography and the arts examined in these essays arose from particular social and cultural formations that, in the historical and methodological insights they offer, transcend the local.

Part One: The Arts of Reproduction

The essays in this section each explore how nineteenth-century processes of photographic reproduction developed within a nexus of cultural, social and institutional forms. Stephen C. Pinson analyses examples of reproductions typically marginalized within scholarship of early photography. In 'A Bug for Photography: Hippolyte Fizeau's Photographic Engraving and Other Media of Reproduction', Pinson draws on a social and artistic network of research, including studies of electricity and entomology, to elucidate the meaning of Fizeau's prints. Working from Henri Zerner's observation that reproduction, as applied to French photography at this date, was less 'a true concept than a nebulous semantic field', Pinson explains the multidisciplinary elements of this field, including the subjects and visual effects of Fizeau's prints. Pinson's enquiry into Fizeau's photographic engravings at this transitional moment draws important new cultural connections between early photographic experiments and the scientific and cultural transformations of the Industrial Revolution.

In 'Casting History: The Role of Photography and Plaster Casting in the Creation of a Colonial Archive', Sarah Victoria Turner evaluates the 'co-endeavour' of these two reproductive means for the South Kensington Museum's early 1870s project to make casts of the architectural details of historical buildings in Delhi. The nexus of activities she examines in this case study involves a British colonialist production ofknowledge of India and its circulation through public exhibitions and photographically illustrated books. Her essay invites us to consider the shared indexical signification of the photograph and the plaster cast; as demonstrated by this project, photography was not necessarily conceived of as the exemplary reproductive mode. Turner's examination of the interaction of these two forms of reproduction – a historical context obscured by the eventual removal of casts from museum displays – describes new conditions of spectatorship and new institutional roles for photographic reproductions of works of art.

In 'Modernizing the Victorian: Reading the Photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron 1886–1914', co-editor Joanne Lukitsh asserts the significance of photographic reproductions in the formation of Cameron's posthumous artistic identity. Cameron insisted on the aesthetic qualities of her albumen prints in myriad ways and, aware of new developments in photographic printing, she turned to the recently perfected carbon process to publish a selection of her photographs before her 1875 move from England to the family's plantation in Sri Lanka (then British Ceylon). From the 1880s until the First World War, Cameron's photographs were known largely through carbon prints and other reproductions. During this period, new generations of photographers pursuing a self-proclaimed artistic practice viewed and produced reproductions of Cameron's photographs, and used them to convey their own aesthetic concerns. Lukitsh analyses how Cameron's distinctly Victorian experimentation with lens-based effects of detail and suggestion were made to support their modernist preoccupations.

Part Two: Photography and Aesthetics

A common dynamic in the four essays in this section is the way each protagonist actively explored how existing aesthetic modes could be extended to photographs. These essays emphasize the historical specificity for these explorations of the physical activities of taking, staging and posing for the camera. Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Évrard is best known in the history of photography for applying the techniques of mass production to the production of paper negatives and photographs. His Imprimerie photographique in Lille, France, is usually characterized as a fledgling, industrial-scale printing factory. In 'The Photographic and the Picturesque: The Aesthetic and Chemical Foundations of Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard's Activities', Herta Wolf presents the complex, and multi-faceted, aims that informed his innovative production of photographs as well as his expectations of the tastes of the audience of scholars and dilettantes for the productions of the Imprimerie. Wolf evaluates how photographs published by Blanquart-Evrard in the 1850s, the result of technical improvements in the chemical sensitivity of the negative, served to transform the parameters of the picturesque landscape image.

In 'Picturesque Conflict: Photography and the Aesthetics of Violence in the Nineteenth-Century British Empire', Sean Robert Willcock examines how photographs of colonialist conflict in India and China participated in the larger social formation of the picturesque as an aesthetic which could sensitize viewers to images of violence and political control. Willcock identifies the active tensions between aesthetics and ethics in such photographs. For example, Felice Beato's staging of scenes of disinterred and dead victims of British colonialist violence for his camera in the 1850s and 1860s saw him invoke aesthetic authority for actions outside of the ostensible norms of the colonial state. Willcock's analysis of picturesque schema in photographs produced in India in the 1870s demonstrates how photographic citations of the picturesque in visual culture continued to bolster the British colonial project.

In 'Sun-struck: Elizabeth Rigby (Eastlake) and the Sun's "Earnest Gaze" in Calotypes by Hill and Adamson', Lindsay Smith cites Eastlake's experience of sitting in the sun to have her calotype portrait taken by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson as formative to her writings on photography: not only in her well-known essay of 1857, which includes her evaluation of photography's connection with art, but also in her less well-known discussion of painting and calotypy published ten years earlier. Examining Eastlake's account of posing in the bright sun for the camera in conjunction with her tracing of aesthetic continuities between depictions of light in calotype photographs and those made in the established graphic arts of 'pencil, brush, and burin', Smith argues that Eastlake's appreciation for the aesthetics of the calotype, and particularly its invocation of a temporal duration, is crucial for understanding Eastlake's later negative judgements on the art claims of photography in the wet-collodion era, when photography became, according to her analysis, a challenge to all manifestations of the established order.

In '"Carlyle Like a Rough Block of Michael Angelo's:" Thinking Photography Through Sculpture in Julia Margaret Cameron's Portraits,' Patrizia Di Bello illuminates the layers of historical meaning in Cameron's bold characterizations of Victorian genius. The photographer's invocation of Michelangelo's practice of leaving his marble sculptures 'unfinished' involved multiple levels of meaning for her photographs, from Victorian debates as to whether the sculptor's *non-finito* was a sign of genius or a failure to uphold academic norms, to Cameron's social and intellectual proximity to this Victorian lion and his famously brusque personality. Di Bello's account, which turns upon questions of focus as an optical or formal effect, argues for situating Cameron's photography in relation not only to Old Master precedents but also to those contemporary sculptural practices that resulted in readily reproducible sculptural commodities.

Part Three: Photography and Painting

The social character of a well-known photographer's involvement with painting is the framework for the essays in this section. Given the decades separating the exchanges between painting and photography explored in the two essays, the transformations of modernity and modernization in nineteenth-century Britain emerge as an important subtext. In 'Art, Reproduction and Reportage: Roger Fenton's Crimean Photographs',

Sophie Gordon discloses an artistic motive in a Victorian photographic project usually considered a work of reportage. Fenton's patrons, the publishers Agnew and Sons, commissioned him to take specific subjects for a popular narrative painter to use as studies; and, while the painting was in production, the publishers sent Fenton's photographs on a national tour, reportedly visited by over 2 million people. She evaluates reviews of the touring exhibition to examine how Fenton's photographs were refracted through the lenses of nationalism and communal experience, read both as records and as poetic reflections upon a controversial war which had been extensively reported in the press.

In 'Impressionism in Photography', Hope Kingsley examines the British photographer George Davison's 1890 argument for the pertinence of this movement in French painting to the practice of artistic photography. Kingsley contends that Impressionism's significance for photographic aesthetics has largely been confined to assertions that turn-of-the-century Pictorialist photographers turned to the example of these painters – whose work was by then uncontroversial – for photographic devices such as soft focus and blur. Kingsley's close reading of British art and photographic texts from the late 1880s to early 1890s sets out specific conditions for the links that Davison made between artistic photography and Impressionism, including his divergence from Peter Henry's Emerson's naturalistic photography. Crucial to Davison's ideas was his practice of pinhole photography, as the diffused effects of focus characteristic of his images were read, both favourably and unfavourably, as Impressionist in intention and result. Kingsley evaluates Davison's argument in the context of the Goupil Gallery's 1889 London exhibition of Claude Monet's paintings, an event which brought the contested nature of Impressionist aesthetics to artistic and photographic circles in England.

Part Four: Artistic Photography

Staging scenes for the camera would seem a likely direction for a nineteenth-century photographer aspiring to the standards of fine art painting. In the case of the United States, this practice was the exception rather than the rule. In '"The Poetical Talents of Our Artists": American Narrative Daguerreotypes,' Diane Waggoner examines a short-lived moment in American culture in the 1850s, when photographers used the daguerreotype process to produce innovative allegorical, religious and genre images. Waggoner analyses the sources of these subjects in high art and visual culture, particularly an emerging American interest in genre paintings of everyday life. The view that photographs should only be used as an instrument of record became, argues Waggoner, hegemonic in the 1860s, bringing an end to these choreographed photographic tableaux.

In Britain in the late 1850s and early 1860s, an emerging discourse of photographic criticism in the specialist photographic press encoded debates on the aesthetics of composition photography with judgements on the political agency of the artistic photographer and the social legitimacy of the practice. Co-editor Juliet Hacking, in '"Radically Vicious": Henry Peach Robinson, Alfred Henry Wall and the Critical Reception of Composition Photography, 1859–63', examines how criticism by Wall,

and others, implicated Robinson's practice in larger threats to an established order. Through close readings of Wall's critical strategies and of the reviews of Robinson's images in the photographic and general press, Hacking makes a case for the social foundation of judgements of photographic imitation and invention.

In 'From "Studies from Nature" to "Studies for Painting": Julia Margaret Cameron in the South Kensington Museum', Marta Weiss investigates whether the acquisition of photographs by Cameron by (what is now) the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, conferred artistic status upon these works. Paying attention to the institutional protocols of the South Kensington acquisition, from the purchase of Cameron's photographs to the institutional taxonomies deployed for their insertion into the Museum's collection, Weiss asserts the unfixed and mutable status of Cameron's photographs within the institution. Tracing Cameron's photographs through the registers of the Museum and correspondence preserved in its archives, she demonstrates that Cameron's photographs were associated variously with Old Master art, with drawings, with art reproductions, with art studies and with templates for design. Cameron's photographs entered the collection on the same terms as the many thousands of other photographs acquired by the museum in the nineteenth century.

The essays in this volume advance their arguments on their own terms: nonetheless, there are certain themes which emerge as an effect of the whole. The postmodernist exaltation of the copy as non-art, fashioned as a means to challenge the mythic status of modernism's sacred cow, that of originality, has proved remarkably persistent (no doubt in part because, as with other legacies of modernism, market forces within cultural industries require hierarchical distinctions such as 'original' and 'copy', 'first' and 'later'). Within Euro-American modernism, the term 'production' invokes symbolic, semantic plenitude, and 'reproduction', deployed as its binary, is identified with automatism, documentation and appropriation, species of an impoverished mimesis. One of the key expressions of the current epistemological moment (taking its cues from the digital) is the turn from 'the logic of the copy' to 'the logic of the reproduction'. Recent scholarship demands that we see a semantically rich reproduction, sometimes figured as 're/production',[43] as an important locus for conceptualizing photography, both present and past, and to imbricate its material forms and metaphoric encodings with a theoretical understanding of 'iteration' that 'following [Jacques] Derrida … names an inevitable repetition with difference'.[44] This volume situates 'reproduction' as a term newly reinvigorated by the evolving epistemologies of the digital era and claims this activity as generative, creative, nay, even artistic. Photography is one issue of a wider visual culture, both historically and now, that values interpretation as much as replication.

To conclude this Introduction, we turn to another strand within contemporary photographic discourse: the ontological and, in particular, the contested question of what constitutes the photographic. Is it the registration of light on the negative, the so-called 'photographic event'? Or is it the creation of the photographic object, made by graphic printing or processes such as early nineteenth-century electroplating? Or

is it the phenomenological affect, which has recently experienced a methodological renaissance? *Photography and the Arts* does not directly engage with these methodological debates; instead it identifies the deployment of historical specificity and deaggregation, material culture and immaterial signification as a significant challenge to the conventional valourisation of scholarly abstraction. In one recent enquiry into what constitutes the properly photographic, the putative philosophical disinterestedness of these debates was exposed when the investigation was framed, without explanation, as one into the question of photography's claim upon the artistic.[45] This is a rhetorical manoeuvre that has attended photographic criticism and theory since the word photography came into wide usage: 'objective' enquiries into the nature, and future, of photography in the nineteenth century were generally framed as an enquiry into, or were substantially concerned with, its relationship to the arts. The disinterestedness claimed for aesthetics is akin to that claimed for philosophy; it allows bias and vested interests to operate as universals. This is the value of specificity (material, historical and scholarly): it allows the reader to see the claims made in relation to their proper scope—and their exclusions. To claim aesthetic activity in photography as mere fetishization, superficial and/or transparent when its 'practices and debates' are so rich in expressions of individual and collective subjectivities is a failure of criticality. *Photography and the Arts: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Practices and Debates* insists that significant and substantive theoretical and cultural activity has arisen, and will continue to do so, from photographic claims upon the aesthetic.

Notes

1 *Art and Photography* appeared, as Scharf acknowledged in his preface, shortly after the publication of three other texts on the subject. We list them here as a reminder that Scharf's sources were not all Anglophone: Andre Vigneau, *Une brève histoire de l'art de Niepce a nos jours* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1963); Van Deren Coke, *The Painter and the Photograph* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1964); Otto Stelzer, *Kunst und Photographie: Kontakte, Einflüsse, Wirkungen* (Munich: Piper, 1966); Aaron Scharf, *Art and Photography* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1968 (1983)), 8.

2 The critic A. D. Coleman recalled first using the phrase 'the photography boom' in his article 'The Fox Talbots were Iffy', in *Camera 35* [1982] (in conversation with Juliet Hacking, spring 2014). He went on to use the phrase 'the Photo Boom' in the title of the anthology of his essays in which the article was later reprinted; A. D. Coleman, *Tarnished Silver: After the Photo Boom, Essays and Lectures 1979–1989* (New York: Midmarch, 1996), 17–25. See also Juliet Hacking, *Photography and the Art Market* (London: Lund Humphries, 2018), chapter 10.

3 Douglas Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, The Library's New Subject', *Parachute* 22 (Spring 1981), 32–7; reprinted in Douglas Crimp, with photographs by Louise Lawler, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: MIT Press, 1993), 66–81, 75.

4 Christopher Phillips, 'The Judgement Seat of Photography, *October* 22 (Autumn 1982): 27–63; reprinted in Richard Bolton (ed.), *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1989), 34–40; John Szarkowski,

The Photographer's Eye (New York: Museum of Modern Art, distributed by the New York Graphic Society, c. 1966).

5 Walter Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography', originally published in *Der Literarische Welt*, 18 September 1931, 25 September 1931 and 2 October 1931, repr. *Screen* 13, no. 1 (1972): 5–26; http://screen.oxfordjournals.org/content/13/1/5.extract# (accessed 20 September 2019), 5. These views were also those of Benjamin's friend Gisèle Freund; Gisèle Freund, *La Photographie en France au dix-neuvième siècle: essai de sociologie et d'esthétique* (Paris: A. Monnier 1936), 49.

6 Abigail Solomon-Godeau, *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). Many of the *October* essays on photography were anthologized in Bolton, *The Contest of Meaning*.

7 For example, Tanya Sheehan, *Doctored: The Medicine of Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), an argument for the centrality of medical models to this period's photographic discourse, is an explicit attempt to counter the art-historization of photography's first half-century.

8 Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire: Conceptions of Photography* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

9 Jennifer Tucker, *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 2005).

10 Mirjam Brusius, Katrina Dean and Chitra Ramalingam (eds), *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013).

11 Vered Maimon, *Singular Images, Failed Copies: William Henry Fox Talbot and the Early Photograph* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

12 Tucker, *Nature Exposed*, 4.

13 Steve Edwards, *The Making of English Photography: Allegories* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Juliet Hacking, 'Photography Personified: Art and Identity in British Photography' (PhD diss., University of London, Courtauld Institute of Art, 1998).

14 Thomas Galifot, 'La femme photographe n'existe pas encore positivement en France … Femmes, féminité et photographie dans le discourse français au XIXeme siècle et au début du XXe siècle', in Ulrich Pohlmann (ed.), *Qui a peur des femmes photographes? 1839–1945* (Paris: Editions Hazan/Musée d'Orsay, 2015), 34–49. The varied engagements of nineteenth-century British women with photography are the subject of at least three current doctoral projects in the UK, those of Erika Lederman and Rose Teanby at De Montfort University, Leicester, and that of George Mind at the University of Westminster/National Portrait Gallery.

15 Nick Salvatore, 'Biography and Social History: An Intimate Relationship', *Labour History* 87 (2004): 187–92.

16 Daniel A. Novak, *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

17 Jordan Bear, *Disillusioned: Victorian Photography and the Discerning Subject* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 4. Bear's reading is challenged in this anthology (see essay 11) by the identification of critical reception rather than 'visual discernment' as the key locus for the political resonances of composition photography.

18 Ibid., 4.

19 'Sarah M. Miller reviews Jordan Bear's Disillusioned', *Critical Inquiry*, 5 November 2015, https://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/sarah_m._miller_reviews_jordan_bears_disillusioned (accessed 10 June 2019).

20 Novak, *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 6.

21 Ibid., 30.

22 Caroline Levine, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense: Victorian Realism and Narrative Doubt* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2003); Helen Groth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Victorian Photography, Literature, and the Invention of Modern Memory: Already the Past* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

23 Nicoletta Leonardi and Simone Natali (eds), *Photography and Other Media in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018). Stephen Bann, 'Against Photographic Exceptionalism', in Tanya Sheehan and Andrés Mario Zervingon, (eds) *Photography and Its Origins* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 94–3.

24 Bann, 'Against Photographic Exceptionalism', 96.

25 Patrizia Di Bello, *Sculptural Photographs: From the Calotype to Digital Technologies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 3.

26 Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Stephen C. Pinson, *Speculating Daguerre: Art & Enterprise in the Work of L.J.M. Daguerre* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Jordan Bear, 'See for Yourself: Visual Discernment and Photography's Appearance', in *Disillusioned*, 11–31.

27 Anne Higonnet, 'Secluded Vision: Images of Feminine Experience in Nineteenth Century Europe', *Radical History Review* 38 (1987): 17–36. Patrizia Di Bello, *Women's Albums and Photography in Victorian England: Ladies, Mothers and Flirts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Elizabeth Siegel with essays by Patrizia Di Bello and Marta Weiss; contributions by Miranda Hofelt (edited by Susan E. Weidemeyer), *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago in association with Yale University Press, 2009).

28 Elizabeth Siegel et al., *Playing with Pictures*, 2009.

29 For indexicality, see Rosalind Krauss, 'Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America', *October* 3 (Spring, 1977): 68–81 and 'Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America, Part 2', *October* 4 (Autumn, 1977), 58–67.

30 Christopher Pinney, *The Coming of Photography in India* (London: The British Library, 2008), 2–4.

31 Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photography, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001), *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination, 1885–1918* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012) and 'Photography and the Material Performance of the Past', *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (December 2009): 130–50. See also Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (eds), *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

32 The privileging of materiality in theoretical terms may be relatively recent but like many of the twenty-first century approaches and concepts outlined here, it emerges from an established methodological strand of cultural (and, under that rubric, art) studies. James Reilly's research on the nineteenth-century production of photographs on albumen paper was published for conservators in the 1980s, when the predominant methodological paradigm for studying photographs was textual;

James M. Reilly, 'The History, Technique and Structure of Albumen Prints', *American Institute for Conservation Preprints*, May 1980, 93–8, http://albumen.conservation-us.org/library/c20/reilly1980.html (accessed 7 July 2019). Today conservators' research is published in exhibition catalogues; see, for example, Mitra Abbaspour, Lee Ann Daffner and Maria Morris Hambourg, *Object: Photo. Modern Photographs: The Thomas Walther Collection 1909–1949* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2014) and Anne McCauley et al., *Clarence H. White and His World: The Art and Craft of Photography, 1895–1925* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). The conference 'Material Immaterial: Photographs in the 21st Century: A FAIC Collaborative Workshop in Photographic Conservation' held at Yale University in September 2019 brought together a range of cultural stakeholders – conservators, art historians and artists, collectors and appraisers – in order to consider the fate of the photographic object in a digital future.

33 Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for A Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2019); Scott McGuire, 'Digital Photography and the Operational Archive', in Sean Cubitt, Daniel Palmer and Nathaniel Tkacz (eds), *Digital Light* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015), 122–43.

34 See Robin Kelsey's contribution to Martha Rosler, Caroline Walker Bynum, Natasha Eaton, Michael Ann Holly, Amelia Jones, Michael Kelly, Robin Kelsey, Alisa LaGamma, Monika Wagner, Oliver Watson and Tristan Weddigen, 'Notes from the Field: Materiality', *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 1 (2013): 10–37. For a far-reaching evaluation of the import of the crisis of global warming for historical narratives of the modern period, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (Winter 2009): 187–222.

35 Charles Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1859', in *Art in Paris 1845–1862, Salons and Other Exhibitions Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*, translated and edited by Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 149–155, 153.

36 Ibid., 154.

37 Ibid.

38 Sabine T. Kriebel and Andrés Mario Zervigón (eds), *Photography and Doubt* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017).

39 Green-Lewis, *Victorian Photography*, xvii.

40 Reilly, ibid., 93–8.

41 Lindsay Smith, *Lewis Carroll: Photography on the Move* (London: Reaktion, 2015); Edwards, *Raw Histories*, 8–9. Gregg Mittman and Kelley Wilder (eds), *Documenting the World: Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).

42 The attention to Julia Margaret Cameron's practice in this anthology is a testament to the important new approaches to photographic aesthetics, visual culture and feminine creativity that continue to be worked though her practice.

43 This styling of 'reproduction' is used by Di Bello in *Sculptural Photographs,* 81.

44 Christopher Pinney, 'Seven Theses', *Thesis Eleven* 113, no. 1 (2012): 141–56, 151.

45 Diarmuid Costello, 'What's So New about the "New" Theory of Photography?', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 75, no. 4 (Fall 2017): 439–52, 439–40.

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Introduction

Juliet Hacking and Joanne Lukitsh

The essays in this anthology redraw established lines of scholarly enquiry into nineteenth-century artistic photography, examining the material and metaphorical interplay between photography and the arts, with 'arts' encompassing a range of media from the visual culture of the time. The arguments advanced in the essays ground the complex exchanges between photography and the fine, graphic and sculptural arts in their material and social contexts, and elucidate how the aesthetic debates that attended to these exchanges were informed by, and spoke to, a range of issues pertaining to science, manufacture, class identities and social aspiration, national identity and imperialism. The photographs illustrated in this volume were encountered on the pages of portfolios, albums and books, viewed on the walls of museums and art galleries, displayed in shop windows, and/or handed from one person to another in meetings of learned societies or photographic organizations. *Photography and the Arts: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Practices and Debates* claims a significance for historical interactions between photography and the arts beyond matters of cultural status, judgements of quality or taxonomy.

The title *Photography and the Arts* is a reworking of Aaron Scharf's 1968 *Art and Photography*. Our title both honours what is arguably the best-known English language text on this subject area and insists upon the difference between its intellectual moment and that of the present.[1] Scharf, in charting the interplay between art and photography (mainly European with some American) in terms of new formal possibilities, cleaved to the modernist idea that 'art' equalled 'painting'. Any cultural recognition due to nineteenth-century photography would be as the agent of painting's renewal. Based on his doctoral thesis undertaken at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, Scharf's text was an example of the incipient assimilation of photography into the European and Anglophone academy in the late 1960s, when the gradual and fitful accumulation of cultural capital to photography, owing predominantly to institutional collecting, exhibitions and publications, began to accelerate. This uplift in photography's place in the attention economy of the Western art world mushroomed, in the mid-1970s, into the phenomenon known as the Photo Boom: a proliferation of specialist formations such as museum departments, commercial galleries, art journals, fair and festivals, publishing imprints and prizes, and of the professional roles that these generated.[2] Fifty years on from Scharf's text, photography is firmly entrenched in the Western art world and its academe.

Already by 1968, the date of the publication of Scharf's book, photography was emerging as central to an incipient paradigm shift, predominantly in the United States and Europe, away from modernism in the visual arts, first in terms of contemporary art practice and later in terms of theory and historiography. Artists critical of the modernist conception of high art, and its commodification by the art market, turned to mass media imagery (including advertising, celebrity and reportage photography) and popular visual culture (including amateur photography) to draw attention to its strictures and exclusions. Artistic and critical attention paid to the ideological freighting of photographs used as objective evidence and as neutral records generated further enquiry into contemporary and historical practices of photography. In the late 1970s and 1980s scholars associated with the New York-based journal *October* critiqued the reduction of 'the formerly plural field of photography' (i.e. images produced for 'information, documentation, evidence, illustration, reportage') into an 'all-encompassing *aesthetic*'.[3] This aesthetic was, predominantly, that advanced by curator John Szarkowski's influential publications and exhibitions of contemporary and historical photographs at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Szarkowski asserted that a specifically photographic 'way of seeing' was at work in *all* photographs: both those made for or used for instrumental purposes and those made and/or displayed for aesthetic ends.[4] This institutionally endorsed aesthetic, with its narrow lexicon of creative photographic expression, drew down on medium specificity, the late modernist trope that conceptualized painting and sculpture in terms of (a constructed) essentialism.

Crucial to the centrality of photography in general, and early photography in particular, to the *October* project was the currency that accrued to the writings of the Frankfurt School cultural critic, Walter Benjamin, after their revival in the 1970s by left-wing scholars and artists critical of modernism. For Benjamin, the art claims of photography made in the nineteenth century were a symptom of its commercialization in the late 1850s, when these claims were a means to fetishize the commercial photographer's services and wares.[5] His theorization of early images, such as those made by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson in the 1840s, in terms of a 'tiny spark of contingency' that resisted subsumption into art, signalled the critical possibilities of the subject of nineteenth-century photography. As was argued by the *October* scholars, particularly Abigail Solomon-Godeau, the production of artistic biographies for photographers, artistic pedigrees for their works and formal readings of their imagery engendered a modernist history of art photography that overwrote the specific nineteenth-century networks in which these photographs had circulated.[6] The art historicization of nineteenth-century photographs saw them gain in cultural status and monetary value but at the cost of their multivalent significance at the time of their making. The *October* school were identified as scholarly contextualists, reclaiming social and sometimes political currency for photographs now subject to the connoisseurial imperatives of art museum display.

The essays in this volume identify the invocation of aesthetics in relation to photography as a historical component of particular social and political conditions. Illuminating these coded cultural interventions requires the historical specificity and intellectual rigour that is necessary for authoritative knowledge production, critical thinking and skilled argument. The essays are, we believe, exemplary in this regard.

Before summarizing their subjects, arguments and approaches, we will first elucidate the dominant methodologies and theoretical framings that inform recent cultural theorizations of the plurality of nineteenth-century practices today characterized as 'the photographic'.

Recent theorizations of photographic meaning in the European and American sciences, social sciences, and literature have reframed narratives of nineteenth-century photography beyond that of a quest for artistic legitimacy.[7] Beginning in the late 1990s, situating nineteenth-century photographs in relation to contemporary epistemological, scientific and philosophical paradigms has become a scholarly imperative, as has an insistence on the interdependence of these paradigms with ideas of physiological and aesthetic vision. In *Burning with Desire: Conceptions of Photography* (1997) Geoffrey Batchen attended to the social and cultural emergence of photography through discourses of photochemical experimentation dating to the Romantic period. In *Objectivity* (2007), a major work in the history of science, Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison identified their subject not as a universal desideratum, but as a specific methodological approach that gained scientific authority in the nineteenth century and was substantially entangled with philosophical and psychological issues of selfhood.[8] The authors, a historian and a philosopher of science respectively, made their claims by reference to the graphic, and sometimes photographic, illustrations of empirical data in scientific compendia. Jennifer Tucker, also a historian of science, analysed photography's emergence as a major component of scientific investigation in *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (2005), in which she argued that photography did not appear fully formed as an objective evidential mode.[9] Instead, because it was seemingly unburdened by the perceived subjective freighting of contemporary scientific writing, objectivity was manufactured for it. Owing to the insights of Galison, Daston, Tucker and other scholars, it is no longer tenable to read the mechanical operations of the camera against the subjectivity and artistic agency of the photographer.

Another strand within this scientific turn is the reinsertion of canonical photographic practices into the scientific networks and discourses from which they had been excised in order to claim them for art. Exemplary here is *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (2013), an anthology of essays that grounds Talbot's photographic research within the multiple fields of scholarly enquiry with which he was involved.[10] Similarly significant are those accounts which overturn the modernist polarization of empirical and aesthetic imperatives and instead trace their interactions. In *Singular Images, Failed Copies: William Henry Fox Talbot and the Early Photograph* (2015), Vered Maimon argues for the recognition that these imperatives were conjoined by a wider epistemological paradigm in which, for example, imagination played a determining, and legitimate, role in science.[11] Maimon argues that the creation of permanent renderings of what was seen in the camera obscura did not result in unmediated autogenetic reproductions. Instead, these images created a discrete visual mode inflected by time, in particular, the temporal duration of the exposure. The recent pictorial turn in the sciences and the scientific turn in photographic discourse are corollaries, evidence of a wider epistemological shift towards a rapprochement of the quantitative and the qualitative.

Jennifer Tucker's assertion that, in relation to British science, 'photographs were the result of labour that was divided by gender and stratified by class' insists upon

the photographic object as resonant with the social meanings of its production, display, circulation and reception.[12] How petit-bourgeois male workers in the British photographic industries encoded their desires for social, political and aesthetic agency in the attempts to have photography recognized as evincing creative labour has been the subject of extensive study.[13] More recently, cultural historians have identified the commercial, scientific and artistic activities of women photographers (both amateur and commercial) and those employed within emerging industries of photography in France and Britain, through research that tracks, often in a nonlinear way, the traces of their photographic activity in overlooked objects and records.[14] In these accounts, social biography is newly invigorated as an approach that allows for individual lives to intersect with, act upon and illuminate the wider economic, political and social conditions of their historical moment.[15]

The claim that the photographic was implicated in questions of labour and enfranchisement in the nineteenth century has been central to two studies of 'composition photography' (photographic tableaux printed from two or more negatives). For the literature scholar Daniel A. Novak, the photographic fragments or studies made for assembly in the darkroom were interchangeable and, as such, akin to the ideal of faceless labour (abstracted labour value) under capitalism.[16] Photographic historian Jordan Bear has recently proposed that 'a primary feature of the development of modern society was the dramatic expansion of an audience empowered to judge the reliability of its own visual experience'.[17] Identifying the social agency at work in tracing the manipulations involved in visual trickery with a growing political consciousness, Bear claims what he calls 'visual discernment' as 'the preferred metaphor in the […] most consequential – and antagonistic – politics of the 1850s. Indeed, it became the key for mediating the individual's agency and his place in the community'.[18] According to Sarah M. Miller, Bear's account serves to 'dislodg[e] the modernist history of photography that valorised objectivity as its patrimony'.[19]

With photography no longer to be read as exemplary of scientific facticity, or in terms of the ambition to make a creative instrument out of a machine, the entanglement of the idea of photography with other subjectives processes and symbolic forms is a newly invigorated area of scholarly study. A significant cross-disciplinary strand of research by literary scholars theorizes how ideas of the photographic informed English-language fiction in the nineteenth century. In his study attending to literary realism, Novak, like his scientific counterparts, broke with the idea of photography as symbolic of a new empirical order and instead attended to its claims upon the grotesque and the typological;[20] according to his analysis, 'both photographic "realism" and Victorian realist fiction produce and depend upon the effacement of particularity'.[21] Other accounts attend to photography's structuring role as regards literary devices (or mental processes that were deployed as such); notable here are Caroline Levine's study of suspense, Helen Groth's of nostalgia and Jennifer Green-Lewis's of memory.[22] These studies reinstate the more arbitrary processes of subjectivity and cognition lost in valourizations of technological objectivity in much twentieth-century cultural writing on nineteenth-century photography. Like these literary studies, cross-disciplinary examinations of photography's embeddedness with 'other media' and their histories, from communications (e.g. telegraphy and news

media) to cultural forms (e.g. graphic arts and cinema), have further 'dislodged' what scholar Stephen Bann decried as the 'tunnel histories' provided by early accounts of nineteenth-century photography: histories that hardly look beyond the subject of photography to explain photography.[23]

Bann has coined the phrase 'photographic exceptionalism' to describe the modernist privileging of photography's place in nineteenth-century visual culture.[24] Examining photography in relation to sculpture, according to Patrizia Di Bello, situated them both, 'as others to the putative singularity of the work of art as formulated in the artistic discourses privileging painting that have dominated Europe and America and their spheres of influence'.[25] The attention now being paid to practices previously excluded from or marginalized within accounts of nineteenth-century photography has substantially widened the parameters of photographic discourse. Recent studies of the metropolitan entertainments in which photography was imbricated, notably the illusionism of theatrical staging and of the displays by street entertainers in the metropolis, drawing upon both experimental and popular science, have further demonstrated the porous nature of the arts and sciences in the period.[26] Historical study of domestic photograph albums compiled in the nineteenth century by upper- and middle-class women, often featuring mixed media photo-collages, has contributed to the revision of conventional notions of the nature of photographic creativity, including its persistent gendering as masculine.[27] This form of 'playing with pictures',[28] together with the manipulations of 'composition photography', claims mutability, performativity, oneiric states and fantasy as among the key creative possibilities of photography and has further destabilized the view that the indexicality generally ascribed to photographic representation in twentieth-century theorizations necessarily governs photographic signification.[29] Scholars in the Global North have increasingly attended to the specificity, and theorization, of practices and debates arising from the South, notably the postcolonies, and their implications for established theoretical and methodological paradigms. Particularly significant for overturning the persistent Anglophone identification of indexical and Foucauldian models for photographic meanings is Christopher Pinney's reading of photography from India as both indexical *and* performative.[30]

In an early twenty-first-century moment of intense transformation in the digital production and circulation of images, the term 'materiality' invokes the digital and social as components of the historical interpretation of photographic meaning. Elizabeth Edwards's writings have been seminal for the strand of the materialist project that situates photographs within specifics of circulation, dissemination and psychical entrenchment. This approach challenges the dominance of theorizations of signification and semiotics by restoring the photograph's currency and affect.[31] A different dimension of the meaning of 'materiality' concerns the contemporary status of the photograph as object in light of the massive cultural shift to digital – smartphones, digital cameras and new 'ecology' of images online.[32] Today the theorization of the digital in photographic studies is less about an epistemic rupture with a previous analogue era and more about the implications of algorithmical reading and mining of data from images online for the 'surveillance capitalism' that defines our particular historical moment.[33] Another, emerging, aspect of 'materiality' concerns the crisis of global warming; presumptions

of the inexhaustible availability of natural resources are now understood in a new frame, that of their embeddedness in an ideology not of progress but of unconstrained exploitation.[34]

In 1859 Charles Baudelaire wrote of 'the ill-applied developments of photography' which 'like all other purely material developments of progress have contributed much to the impoverishment of French artistic genius'.[35] This polarization of photography and imagination saw Baudelaire propose that photography 'return to its true duty, which is to be the servant of the sciences and the arts–but the very humble servant, like printing or shorthand, which have neither created nor supplemented literature'.[36] Baudelaire's equation of photographic knowledge with the clerical class was disparaging to both, nonetheless he characterizes this lowly photographic labour as important: 'Let it [photography] rescue from oblivion those tumbling ruins, those books, prints, and manuscripts which time is devouring, precious things whose form is dissolving and which demand a place in the archives of our memory.'[37] Baudelaire's vision of the promised capacity of photography to preserve things for human memory, to intervene in the passage of time, is contemporaneous with the emergence of the wet-collodion negative, printed onto albumen or salt paper. Albumen paper is conventionally connected to the industrial scale production of stereograph cards and carte-de-visite photographs, and therefore to the emergence of photography as a component of a European and American spectacular modernity and consumerism. But Baudelaire's projections of the infinite numbers of prints which could be made from a single negative were exactly that: projections. The role he envisioned for photographs as a bulwark against the ruptures of modernization was unconstrained by the physical limitations of fading photographic prints and broken glass negatives.

As scholars have only recently noted, there is ample evidence of a recognition in the nineteenth century of photography's insufficiency in relation to the novel powers claimed for it.[38] This was also true, we would say, of the fantasies, such as Baudelaire's, of photography as an infallible reproductive process. Jennifer Green-Lewis has written of the need for 'wider conversation … that attends to the technical realities of photography, including the limitations, innovations, and commercial pressures of specific historic moments and photographic "networks"'.[39] The nineteenth-century photograph was not a standardized commodity: to take just one example, few steps in the manufacture of albumen paper were mechanized.[40] Countering 'photographic exceptionalism' means reconsidering now canonical contemporary texts and statements concerned with photography as an (immaterial) epiphenomenon of modernity and modernization in conjunction with the significance of material objects and practices in the production of photographic meanings.

Today, with vastly increased access to knowledge and objects via notionally immaterial digital resources, the interplay of the material and the immaterial is a determining feature of our contemporary moment and historical method. The essays in this volume argue for the recognition of the symbiotic nature of material manifestations with immaterial conceptions of photography rather than situating them as proper to, respectively, micro- and macro-level analysis. The mutability at stake in the physical production of photographs during this period here comes to the fore, as does the mutability of the photographic image when subject to reception,

circulation, acquisition and preservation. The mapping of material formations and the multiple networks to which they belonged enables us to reconstruct the significant, but sometimes intangible, exchanges to which these gave rise. Scholarship which traces the appearance of photographs in more than one discursive realm, such as their circulation between private individuals and between institutions, by hand, by post and by steam packet, further undermines the credibility of the idea that nineteenth-century photographs ever evinced fixed meanings.[41]

The title of this anthology does not specify a geographic qualifier. This is not to universalize the predominantly Western European, British colonial (and, to a lesser extent) American scenarios, practices and discourse that the essays present. The imperatives of industrial capitalism, giving rise to, in the sphere of visual culture, cheaper modes of dissemination of textual and visual imagery, are always in tension with specific national formations (such as political discourse, scientific research, government patronage of the arts and arts education) and with more metropolitan formations (such as the display, and sale, of historical and contemporary art). The historical specificity of the case studies presented here is the basis of their broader significance: their rigorous historical method is the standard by which to judge their findings and interpretations. Other important contributions made by this volume include the bringing together of canonical 'art' practices with research attending to science, manufacture and popular imagery. The self-avowed artistic endeavours of British figures such as Hill and Adamson, Henry Peach Robinson, Julia Margaret Cameron, Peter Henry Emerson and George Davison may have come to our attention owing to the Anglo-American modernist project but our rejection of the latter does not inevitably lead to rejection of the former; nor does it mean that these individuals and their practices cannot be discussed in the same frame as chemical experimentation of the Imprimerie photographique in Lille or the undercurrent of violence in tourist imagery of the British Raj.[42] The interplay between photography and the arts examined in these essays arose from particular social and cultural formations that, in the historical and methodological insights they offer, transcend the local.

Part One: The Arts of Reproduction

The essays in this section each explore how nineteenth-century processes of photographic reproduction developed within a nexus of cultural, social and institutional forms. Stephen C. Pinson analyses examples of reproductions typically marginalized within scholarship of early photography. In 'A Bug for Photography: Hippolyte Fizeau's Photographic Engraving and Other Media of Reproduction', Pinson draws on a social and artistic network of research, including studies of electricity and entomology, to elucidate the meaning of Fizeau's prints. Working from Henri Zerner's observation that reproduction, as applied to French photography at this date, was less 'a true concept than a nebulous semantic field', Pinson explains the multidisciplinary elements of this field, including the subjects and visual effects of Fizeau's prints. Pinson's enquiry into Fizeau's photographic engravings at this transitional moment draws important new cultural connections between early photographic experiments and the scientific and cultural transformations of the Industrial Revolution.

In 'Casting History: The Role of Photography and Plaster Casting in the Creation of a Colonial Archive', Sarah Victoria Turner evaluates the 'co-endeavour' of these two reproductive means for the South Kensington Museum's early 1870s project to make casts of the architectural details of historical buildings in Delhi. The nexus of activities she examines in this case study involves a British colonialist production ofknowledge of India and its circulation through public exhibitions and photographically illustrated books. Her essay invites us to consider the shared indexical signification of the photograph and the plaster cast; as demonstrated by this project, photography was not necessarily conceived of as the exemplary reproductive mode. Turner's examination of the interaction of these two forms of reproduction – a historical context obscured by the eventual removal of casts from museum displays – describes new conditions of spectatorship and new institutional roles for photographic reproductions of works of art.

In 'Modernizing the Victorian: Reading the Photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron 1886–1914', co-editor Joanne Lukitsh asserts the significance of photographic reproductions in the formation of Cameron's posthumous artistic identity. Cameron insisted on the aesthetic qualities of her albumen prints in myriad ways and, aware of new developments in photographic printing, she turned to the recently perfected carbon process to publish a selection of her photographs before her 1875 move from England to the family's plantation in Sri Lanka (then British Ceylon). From the 1880s until the First World War, Cameron's photographs were known largely through carbon prints and other reproductions. During this period, new generations of photographers pursuing a self-proclaimed artistic practice viewed and produced reproductions of Cameron's photographs, and used them to convey their own aesthetic concerns. Lukitsh analyses how Cameron's distinctly Victorian experimentation with lens-based effects of detail and suggestion were made to support their modernist preoccupations.

Part Two: Photography and Aesthetics

A common dynamic in the four essays in this section is the way each protagonist actively explored how existing aesthetic modes could be extended to photographs. These essays emphasize the historical specificity for these explorations of the physical activities of taking, staging and posing for the camera. Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Évrard is best known in the history of photography for applying the techniques of mass production to the production of paper negatives and photographs. His Imprimerie photographique in Lille, France, is usually characterized as a fledgling, industrial-scale printing factory. In 'The Photographic and the Picturesque: The Aesthetic and Chemical Foundations of Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard's Activities', Herta Wolf presents the complex, and multi-faceted, aims that informed his innovative production of photographs as well as his expectations of the tastes of the audience of scholars and dilettantes for the productions of the Imprimerie. Wolf evaluates how photographs published by Blanquart-Evrard in the 1850s, the result of technical improvements in the chemical sensitivity of the negative, served to transform the parameters of the picturesque landscape image.

In 'Picturesque Conflict: Photography and the Aesthetics of Violence in the Nineteenth-Century British Empire', Sean Robert Willcock examines how photographs of colonialist conflict in India and China participated in the larger social formation of the picturesque as an aesthetic which could sensitize viewers to images of violence and political control. Willcock identifies the active tensions between aesthetics and ethics in such photographs. For example, Felice Beato's staging of scenes of disinterred and dead victims of British colonialist violence for his camera in the 1850s and 1860s saw him invoke aesthetic authority for actions outside of the ostensible norms of the colonial state. Willcock's analysis of picturesque schema in photographs produced in India in the 1870s demonstrates how photographic citations of the picturesque in visual culture continued to bolster the British colonial project.

In 'Sun-struck: Elizabeth Rigby (Eastlake) and the Sun's "Earnest Gaze" in Calotypes by Hill and Adamson', Lindsay Smith cites Eastlake's experience of sitting in the sun to have her calotype portrait taken by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson as formative to her writings on photography: not only in her well-known essay of 1857, which includes her evaluation of photography's connection with art, but also in her less well-known discussion of painting and calotypy published ten years earlier. Examining Eastlake's account of posing in the bright sun for the camera in conjunction with her tracing of aesthetic continuities between depictions of light in calotype photographs and those made in the established graphic arts of 'pencil, brush, and burin', Smith argues that Eastlake's appreciation for the aesthetics of the calotype, and particularly its invocation of a temporal duration, is crucial for understanding Eastlake's later negative judgements on the art claims of photography in the wet-collodion era, when photography became, according to her analysis, a challenge to all manifestations of the established order.

In '"Carlyle Like a Rough Block of Michael Angelo's:" Thinking Photography Through Sculpture in Julia Margaret Cameron's Portraits,' Patrizia Di Bello illuminates the layers of historical meaning in Cameron's bold characterizations of Victorian genius. The photographer's invocation of Michelangelo's practice of leaving his marble sculptures 'unfinished' involved multiple levels of meaning for her photographs, from Victorian debates as to whether the sculptor's *non-finito* was a sign of genius or a failure to uphold academic norms, to Cameron's social and intellectual proximity to this Victorian lion and his famously brusque personality. Di Bello's account, which turns upon questions of focus as an optical or formal effect, argues for situating Cameron's photography in relation not only to Old Master precedents but also to those contemporary sculptural practices that resulted in readily reproducible sculptural commodities.

Part Three: Photography and Painting

The social character of a well-known photographer's involvement with painting is the framework for the essays in this section. Given the decades separating the exchanges between painting and photography explored in the two essays, the transformations of modernity and modernization in nineteenth-century Britain emerge as an important subtext. In 'Art, Reproduction and Reportage: Roger Fenton's Crimean Photographs',

Sophie Gordon discloses an artistic motive in a Victorian photographic project usually considered a work of reportage. Fenton's patrons, the publishers Agnew and Sons, commissioned him to take specific subjects for a popular narrative painter to use as studies; and, while the painting was in production, the publishers sent Fenton's photographs on a national tour, reportedly visited by over 2 million people. She evaluates reviews of the touring exhibition to examine how Fenton's photographs were refracted through the lenses of nationalism and communal experience, read both as records and as poetic reflections upon a controversial war which had been extensively reported in the press.

In 'Impressionism in Photography', Hope Kingsley examines the British photographer George Davison's 1890 argument for the pertinence of this movement in French painting to the practice of artistic photography. Kingsley contends that Impressionism's significance for photographic aesthetics has largely been confined to assertions that turn-of-the-century Pictorialist photographers turned to the example of these painters – whose work was by then uncontroversial – for photographic devices such as soft focus and blur. Kingsley's close reading of British art and photographic texts from the late 1880s to early 1890s sets out specific conditions for the links that Davison made between artistic photography and Impressionism, including his divergence from Peter Henry's Emerson's naturalistic photography. Crucial to Davison's ideas was his practice of pinhole photography, as the diffused effects of focus characteristic of his images were read, both favourably and unfavourably, as Impressionist in intention and result. Kingsley evaluates Davison's argument in the context of the Goupil Gallery's 1889 London exhibition of Claude Monet's paintings, an event which brought the contested nature of Impressionist aesthetics to artistic and photographic circles in England.

Part Four: Artistic Photography

Staging scenes for the camera would seem a likely direction for a nineteenth-century photographer aspiring to the standards of fine art painting. In the case of the United States, this practice was the exception rather than the rule. In '"The Poetical Talents of Our Artists": American Narrative Daguerreotypes,' Diane Waggoner examines a short-lived moment in American culture in the 1850s, when photographers used the daguerreotype process to produce innovative allegorical, religious and genre images. Waggoner analyses the sources of these subjects in high art and visual culture, particularly an emerging American interest in genre paintings of everyday life. The view that photographs should only be used as an instrument of record became, argues Waggoner, hegemonic in the 1860s, bringing an end to these choreographed photographic tableaux.

In Britain in the late 1850s and early 1860s, an emerging discourse of photographic criticism in the specialist photographic press encoded debates on the aesthetics of composition photography with judgements on the political agency of the artistic photographer and the social legitimacy of the practice. Co-editor Juliet Hacking, in '"Radically Vicious": Henry Peach Robinson, Alfred Henry Wall and the Critical Reception of Composition Photography, 1859–63', examines how criticism by Wall,

and others, implicated Robinson's practice in larger threats to an established order. Through close readings of Wall's critical strategies and of the reviews of Robinson's images in the photographic and general press, Hacking makes a case for the social foundation of judgements of photographic imitation and invention.

In 'From "Studies from Nature" to "Studies for Painting": Julia Margaret Cameron in the South Kensington Museum', Marta Weiss investigates whether the acquisition of photographs by Cameron by (what is now) the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, conferred artistic status upon these works. Paying attention to the institutional protocols of the South Kensington acquisition, from the purchase of Cameron's photographs to the institutional taxonomies deployed for their insertion into the Museum's collection, Weiss asserts the unfixed and mutable status of Cameron's photographs within the institution. Tracing Cameron's photographs through the registers of the Museum and correspondence preserved in its archives, she demonstrates that Cameron's photographs were associated variously with Old Master art, with drawings, with art reproductions, with art studies and with templates for design. Cameron's photographs entered the collection on the same terms as the many thousands of other photographs acquired by the museum in the nineteenth century.

The essays in this volume advance their arguments on their own terms: nonetheless, there are certain themes which emerge as an effect of the whole. The postmodernist exaltation of the copy as non-art, fashioned as a means to challenge the mythic status of modernism's sacred cow, that of originality, has proved remarkably persistent (no doubt in part because, as with other legacies of modernism, market forces within cultural industries require hierarchical distinctions such as 'original' and 'copy', 'first' and 'later'). Within Euro-American modernism, the term 'production' invokes symbolic, semantic plenitude, and 'reproduction', deployed as its binary, is identified with automatism, documentation and appropriation, species of an impoverished mimesis. One of the key expressions of the current epistemological moment (taking its cues from the digital) is the turn from 'the logic of the copy' to 'the logic of the reproduction'. Recent scholarship demands that we see a semantically rich reproduction, sometimes figured as 're/production',[43] as an important locus for conceptualizing photography, both present and past, and to imbricate its material forms and metaphoric encodings with a theoretical understanding of 'iteration' that 'following [Jacques] Derrida … names an inevitable repetition with difference'.[44] This volume situates 'reproduction' as a term newly reinvigorated by the evolving epistemologies of the digital era and claims this activity as generative, creative, nay, even artistic. Photography is one issue of a wider visual culture, both historically and now, that values interpretation as much as replication.

To conclude this Introduction, we turn to another strand within contemporary photographic discourse: the ontological and, in particular, the contested question of what constitutes the photographic. Is it the registration of light on the negative, the so-called 'photographic event'? Or is it the creation of the photographic object, made by graphic printing or processes such as early nineteenth-century electroplating? Or

is it the phenomenological affect, which has recently experienced a methodological renaissance? *Photography and the Arts* does not directly engage with these methodological debates; instead it identifies the deployment of historical specificity and deaggregation, material culture and immaterial signification as a significant challenge to the conventional valourisation of scholarly abstraction. In one recent enquiry into what constitutes the properly photographic, the putative philosophical disinterestedness of these debates was exposed when the investigation was framed, without explanation, as one into the question of photography's claim upon the artistic.[45] This is a rhetorical manoeuvre that has attended photographic criticism and theory since the word photography came into wide usage: 'objective' enquiries into the nature, and future, of photography in the nineteenth century were generally framed as an enquiry into, or were substantially concerned with, its relationship to the arts. The disinterestedness claimed for aesthetics is akin to that claimed for philosophy; it allows bias and vested interests to operate as universals. This is the value of specificity (material, historical and scholarly): it allows the reader to see the claims made in relation to their proper scope—and their exclusions. To claim aesthetic activity in photography as mere fetishization, superficial and/or transparent when its 'practices and debates' are so rich in expressions of individual and collective subjectivities is a failure of criticality. *Photography and the Arts: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Practices and Debates* insists that significant and substantive theoretical and cultural activity has arisen, and will continue to do so, from photographic claims upon the aesthetic.

Notes

1 *Art and Photography* appeared, as Scharf acknowledged in his preface, shortly after the publication of three other texts on the subject. We list them here as a reminder that Scharf's sources were not all Anglophone: Andre Vigneau, *Une brève histoire de l'art de Niepce a nos jours* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1963); Van Deren Coke, *The Painter and the Photograph* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1964); Otto Stelzer, *Kunst und Photographie: Kontakte, Einflüsse, Wirkungen* (Munich: Piper, 1966); Aaron Scharf, *Art and Photography* (London: Allen Lane, The Penguin Press, 1968 (1983)), 8.

2 The critic A. D. Coleman recalled first using the phrase 'the photography boom' in his article 'The Fox Talbots were Iffy', in *Camera 35* [1982] (in conversation with Juliet Hacking, spring 2014). He went on to use the phrase 'the Photo Boom' in the title of the anthology of his essays in which the article was later reprinted; A. D. Coleman, *Tarnished Silver: After the Photo Boom, Essays and Lectures 1979–1989* (New York: Midmarch, 1996), 17–25. See also Juliet Hacking, *Photography and the Art Market* (London: Lund Humphries, 2018), chapter 10.

3 Douglas Crimp, 'The Museum's Old, The Library's New Subject', *Parachute* 22 (Spring 1981), 32–7; reprinted in Douglas Crimp, with photographs by Louise Lawler, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: MIT Press, 1993), 66–81, 75.

4 Christopher Phillips, 'The Judgement Seat of Photography, *October* 22 (Autumn 1982): 27–63; reprinted in Richard Bolton (ed.), *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1989), 34–40; John Szarkowski,

The Photographer's Eye (New York: Museum of Modern Art, distributed by the New York Graphic Society, c. 1966).

5 Walter Benjamin, 'A Short History of Photography', originally published in *Der Literarische Welt*, 18 September 1931, 25 September 1931 and 2 October 1931, repr. *Screen* 13, no. 1 (1972): 5–26; http://screen.oxfordjournals.org/content/13/1/5.extract# (accessed 20 September 2019), 5. These views were also those of Benjamin's friend Gisèle Freund; Gisèle Freund, *La Photographie en France au dix-neuvième siècle: essai de sociologie et d'esthétique* (Paris: A. Monnier 1936), 49.

6 Abigail Solomon-Godeau, *Photography at the Dock: Essays on Photographic History, Institutions, and Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). Many of the *October* essays on photography were anthologized in Bolton, *The Contest of Meaning*.

7 For example, Tanya Sheehan, *Doctored: The Medicine of Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), an argument for the centrality of medical models to this period's photographic discourse, is an explicit attempt to counter the art-historization of photography's first half-century.

8 Geoffrey Batchen, *Burning with Desire: Conceptions of Photography* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

9 Jennifer Tucker, *Nature Exposed: Photography as Eyewitness in Victorian Science* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 2005).

10 Mirjam Brusius, Katrina Dean and Chitra Ramalingam (eds), *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2013).

11 Vered Maimon, *Singular Images, Failed Copies: William Henry Fox Talbot and the Early Photograph* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

12 Tucker, *Nature Exposed*, 4.

13 Steve Edwards, *The Making of English Photography: Allegories* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Juliet Hacking, 'Photography Personified: Art and Identity in British Photography' (PhD diss., University of London, Courtauld Institute of Art, 1998).

14 Thomas Galifot, 'La femme photographe n'existe pas encore positivement en France … Femmes, féminité et photographie dans le discourse français au XIXeme siècle et au début du XXe siècle', in Ulrich Pohlmann (ed.), *Qui a peur des femmes photographes? 1839–1945* (Paris: Editions Hazan/Musée d'Orsay, 2015), 34–49. The varied engagements of nineteenth-century British women with photography are the subject of at least three current doctoral projects in the UK, those of Erika Lederman and Rose Teanby at De Montfort University, Leicester, and that of George Mind at the University of Westminster/National Portrait Gallery.

15 Nick Salvatore, 'Biography and Social History: An Intimate Relationship', *Labour History* 87 (2004): 187–92.

16 Daniel A. Novak, *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

17 Jordan Bear, *Disillusioned: Victorian Photography and the Discerning Subject* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 4. Bear's reading is challenged in this anthology (see essay 11) by the identification of critical reception rather than 'visual discernment' as the key locus for the political resonances of composition photography.

18 Ibid., 4.

19 'Sarah M. Miller reviews Jordan Bear's Disillusioned', *Critical Inquiry*, 5 November 2015, https://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/sarah_m._miller_reviews_jordan_bears_disillusioned (accessed 10 June 2019).

20 Novak, *Realism, Photography and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 6.

21 Ibid., 30.

22 Caroline Levine, *The Serious Pleasures of Suspense: Victorian Realism and Narrative Doubt* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2003); Helen Groth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Jennifer Green-Lewis, *Victorian Photography, Literature, and the Invention of Modern Memory: Already the Past* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

23 Nicoletta Leonardi and Simone Natali (eds), *Photography and Other Media in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2018). Stephen Bann, 'Against Photographic Exceptionalism', in Tanya Sheehan and Andrés Mario Zervingon, (eds) *Photography and Its Origins* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 94–3.

24 Bann, 'Against Photographic Exceptionalism', 96.

25 Patrizia Di Bello, *Sculptural Photographs: From the Calotype to Digital Technologies* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 3.

26 Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Stephen C. Pinson, *Speculating Daguerre: Art & Enterprise in the Work of L.J.M. Daguerre* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Jordan Bear, 'See for Yourself: Visual Discernment and Photography's Appearance', in *Disillusioned*, 11–31.

27 Anne Higonnet, 'Secluded Vision: Images of Feminine Experience in Nineteenth Century Europe', *Radical History Review* 38 (1987): 17–36. Patrizia Di Bello, *Women's Albums and Photography in Victorian England: Ladies, Mothers and Flirts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Elizabeth Siegel with essays by Patrizia Di Bello and Marta Weiss; contributions by Miranda Hofelt (edited by Susan E. Weidemeyer), *Playing with Pictures: The Art of Victorian Photocollage* (Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago in association with Yale University Press, 2009).

28 Elizabeth Siegel et al., *Playing with Pictures*, 2009.

29 For indexicality, see Rosalind Krauss, 'Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America', *October* 3 (Spring, 1977): 68–81 and 'Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America, Part 2', *October* 4 (Autumn, 1977), 58–67.

30 Christopher Pinney, *The Coming of Photography in India* (London: The British Library, 2008), 2–4.

31 Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photography, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001), *The Camera as Historian: Amateur Photographers and Historical Imagination, 1885–1918* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012) and 'Photography and the Material Performance of the Past', *History and Theory* 48, no. 4 (December 2009): 130–50. See also Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (eds), *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

32 The privileging of materiality in theoretical terms may be relatively recent but like many of the twenty-first century approaches and concepts outlined here, it emerges from an established methodological strand of cultural (and, under that rubric, art) studies. James Reilly's research on the nineteenth-century production of photographs on albumen paper was published for conservators in the 1980s, when the predominant methodological paradigm for studying photographs was textual;

James M. Reilly, 'The History, Technique and Structure of Albumen Prints', *American Institute for Conservation Preprints*, May 1980, 93–8, http://albumen.conservation-us.org/library/c20/reilly1980.html (accessed 7 July 2019). Today conservators' research is published in exhibition catalogues; see, for example, Mitra Abbaspour, Lee Ann Daffner and Maria Morris Hambourg, *Object: Photo. Modern Photographs: The Thomas Walther Collection 1909–1949* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2014) and Anne McCauley et al., *Clarence H. White and His World: The Art and Craft of Photography, 1895–1925* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). The conference 'Material Immaterial: Photographs in the 21st Century: A FAIC Collaborative Workshop in Photographic Conservation' held at Yale University in September 2019 brought together a range of cultural stakeholders – conservators, art historians and artists, collectors and appraisers – in order to consider the fate of the photographic object in a digital future.

33 Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for A Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (New York: Public Affairs, 2019); Scott McGuire, 'Digital Photography and the Operational Archive', in Sean Cubitt, Daniel Palmer and Nathaniel Tkacz (eds), *Digital Light* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2015), 122–43.

34 See Robin Kelsey's contribution to Martha Rosler, Caroline Walker Bynum, Natasha Eaton, Michael Ann Holly, Amelia Jones, Michael Kelly, Robin Kelsey, Alisa LaGamma, Monika Wagner, Oliver Watson and Tristan Weddigen, 'Notes from the Field: Materiality', *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 1 (2013): 10–37. For a far-reaching evaluation of the import of the crisis of global warming for historical narratives of the modern period, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry* 35 (Winter 2009): 187–222.

35 Charles Baudelaire, 'The Salon of 1859', in *Art in Paris 1845–1862, Salons and Other Exhibitions Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*, translated and edited by Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 149–155, 153.

36 Ibid., 154.

37 Ibid.

38 Sabine T. Kriebel and Andrés Mario Zervigón (eds), *Photography and Doubt* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2017).

39 Green-Lewis, *Victorian Photography*, xvii.

40 Reilly, ibid., 93–8.

41 Lindsay Smith, *Lewis Carroll: Photography on the Move* (London: Reaktion, 2015); Edwards, *Raw Histories*, 8–9. Gregg Mittman and Kelley Wilder (eds), *Documenting the World: Film, Photography, and the Scientific Record* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016).

42 The attention to Julia Margaret Cameron's practice in this anthology is a testament to the important new approaches to photographic aesthetics, visual culture and feminine creativity that continue to be worked though her practice.

43 This styling of 'reproduction' is used by Di Bello in *Sculptural Photographs,* 81.

44 Christopher Pinney, 'Seven Theses', *Thesis Eleven* 113, no. 1 (2012): 141–56, 151.

45 Diarmuid Costello, 'What's So New about the "New" Theory of Photography?', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 75, no. 4 (Fall 2017): 439–52, 439–40.

1

A Bug for Photography? Hippolyte Fizeau's Photographic Engraving and Other Media of Reproduction

Stephen C. Pinson

In 1936, the New York Public Library (NYPL) acquired a collection of books and images that once belonged to the French physicist Armand-Louis-Hippolyte Fizeau (1819–96).[1] Generally recognized today for measuring the speed of light, Fizeau was also at the centre of a group of early photographic innovators with whom he exchanged letters, publications, photographs and trial proofs from experimental processes. Counted among the collection are examples of some of the most prized material from photography's early history, including calotypes by William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–77) and a signed copy of the first fascicle of his *The Pencil of Nature* (1844), considered to be the first photographically illustrated book published for sale. Less well known is a group of about fifty prints, the majority of which were made using a process developed by Fizeau to etch and print from daguerreotypes by transforming the silvered copper plate into a printing matrix. Owing to their hybrid status as ink-based photographic reproductions, these printed incunabula have had little purchase in most accounts of photography's intersection with modern art. Unlike photographs derived from negatives—which are often viewed as 'original' despite existing as multiples—these works did not benefit from photography's assimilation into the history of art after the medium's entrance into museums and newly created art divisions within libraries during the twentieth century.[2] Nor did they serve as evidence to debunk modernism's claims to originality, a tactic complicated by the supposed uniqueness of the daguerreotype. As a result, Fizeau's process and other early attempts to reproduce daguerreotypes were left as technical footnotes in most histories of photography, in which Fizeau is best known for his contributions to *Excursions daguerriennes* (1840–4), the extensive publication masterminded by the optician and publisher Noël Paymal Lerebours (1807–73), featuring graphic engravings after topographical daguerreotypes.[3] But the truth is that even in the 1840s, Fizeau's work would not have fit easily into any narrowly defined concept of *reproduction*, a term that had only recently been applied to photography.

As late as 1835, the dictionary of the French Academy only used the word *reproduction* in its original sense of regeneration or procreation, as borrowed from the

field of biology.[4] Within five years, however, it had been extended to photography and other industrial processes used to create multiple, identical products. As Henri Zerner cautions, '*Reproduction* functions less as a true concept than as a nebulous semantic field, the multiple and sometimes contradictory connotations of which can work for or against the elevation of the status of photography within the cultural values of the time.'[5] In this sense, *reproduction* was part of what Zerner calls an 'unstable vocabulary', including many neologisms, which marked photography's first decade by an attempt to specify the new invention coupled with a 'more natural tendency to view the unknown in terms of the known.'[6] Taking this notion of reproduction as a methodological starting point, this chapter offers a reassessment of Fizeau's images within the visual economy of the early nineteenth century. Just as Fizeau found himself at the centre of a multidisciplinary network, his reproductions intersected with the nascent fields of photography, electricity and entomology, domains which had more in common than our current histories have allowed.

Specimens

The sales catalogue summary of the London dealer E.P. Goldschmidt, from whom the NYPL purchased the Fizeau collection, describes the various 'specimens of early portraits [and] daguerreotype prints' as 'quite rare indeed'.[7] My research shows that the perceived rarity of these works is directly related to the fact that they have remained, until now, largely unexplored (with most of the subjects still unidentified) whereas their actual rarity is relative.[8] The NYPL appears to hold the largest trove of Fizeau's work, followed by the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers in Paris and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles; there are also examples scattered among private collectors and across several other institutions internationally.[9] Several of the NYPL's photographic engravings exist in multiple states—some of which Fizeau accordingly inscribed in ink '1ere' [*sic*] and '2eme' [*sic*]—indicating that they are the first and second states of trial proofs (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). A closer look at these works reveals important clues about their production, including hallmarks (symbols engraved or stamped into the plates with potential information about silver content and/or manufacturer) and printing techniques.

Although there is still no definitive catalogue of daguerreotype hallmarks, the available sources indicate that two of the printed marks on the NYPL material (a sexpartite rosette and the letters 'HS') appear on daguerreotype plates as early as 1843, when Fizeau first showed examples of his photographic engravings at a meeting of the Académie des Sciences in Paris and the year before he patented the process.[10] The numeral '10' that appears in the corners of many of the photographic engravings indicates the ratio of silver to copper (1–10) which is in fact high for daguerreotypes, the more common ratio being 1–40. The number is important, however, because Fizeau recommended the 1/10th ratio for his process.[11] Such details, which have long been the basis of print connoisseurship, are often neglected or absent in studies of early photography, particularly when it comes to hybrid media such as photo-engravings. Yet, as in this case, they often help ascertain or confirm production date, support attribution and provide context for specific techniques. For example, slight variations

Figure 1.1 Hippolyte Fizeau and Noël Paymal Lerebours, *Virtues,* bas-relief from Notre-Dame de Paris (first state), 1841–4, photographic engraving. Image: 4 $^{3}/_{16}$ × 3 in (10.6 × 7.6 cm). The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library (106PH1349.026). Reproduced with the permission of The New York Public Library. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/11653420-1e64-0137-4337-653b444e2651.

Figure 1.2 Hippolyte Fizeau and Noël Paymal Lerebours, *Virtues*, bas-relief from Notre-Dame de Paris (second state), 1841–4, photographic engraving. Image: 4 $^{3}/_{16}$ × 3 in (10.6 × 7.6 cm). The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library (106PH1349.027). Reproduced with the permission of The New York Public Library. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/12398bb0-1e64-0137-0097-5732a5866d48.

in the different states of the same printed image are related to the fact that Fizeau printed them from a single plate he had etched at different depths and/or from various states of the daguerreotypes that he electroplated as part of his photographic engraving process.[12] See, for example, the more nuanced shading and greater degree of detail visible in the second state of the trial proof introduced above (Figure 1.2).

Fizeau's experiments followed the realization by Moritz von Jacobi (1801–74) in 1838 that electroplating—the deposit of metal that occurred on copper plates through chemically produced electricity—had endless applications, from printing to the reproduction of industrial objects and art.[13] Fizeau appears to have been the first researcher to apply the process to daguerreotypes, making copies from originals throughout the spring of 1841 in advance of attempting photographic engraving.[14] The latter process is complex, but Fizeau essentially used an acid-etched daguerreotype plate as one pole of a battery onto which he first electroplated a layer of gold and then a final layer of copper, thereby making the plate thicker and increasing the depth at which it could be etched and, consequently, the number of impressions that could be made. Lerebours purchased the rights to Fizeau's patent in France, and the Swiss engraver Johann Hurlimann (1793–1850) oversaw the printing of the plates. Lerebours's surname (having first been engraved on the daguerreotype plates) appears in reverse on many of the NYPL's photographic engravings, and Hurlimann is the only named sitter among the fourteen portraits in Fizeau's collection at the NYPL.[15]

The subjects of Fizeau's photographic engravings that I have been able to identify comprise, in addition to portraits, reproductive engravings after paintings, including one by Jean Louis Roullet (1645–99) after *The Virgin of the Grapes* by Pierre Mignard (1612–95), and the infamous engraving by Paolo Mercuri (1804–84) after the 1831 Salon painting, *Arrival of the Harvesters in the Pontine Marshes*, by Léopold Robert (1794–1835).[16] There are also architectural details and reproductions of sculpture, including bas-reliefs from Notre Dame cathedral [the fourteenth-century *Funeral of the Virgin* from the choir of the north façade (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2), and the thirteenth-century *Virtues* from the south transept]; a statue of the Immaculate Conception, complete with a serpent at the feet of Mary, who is crowned with stars; and a plaster copy (Figure 1.3) of David d'Anger's 1833 bust of the naturalist Georges Cuvier (1769–1832).[17] Other subjects that might be called 'scientific' include a barometer designed by Lerebours, a trial proof printed from a daguerreotype micrograph likely made for Alfred Donné's *Cours de microscopie* (1845) and an enlargement of a bug, to which we will return (Figure 1.4).[18] This hodgepodge of subject matter was typical of early attempts at photomechanical reproduction, which included prints aimed at an audience of artists, scientists and the publishing industry. Fizeau was relying upon a selection of available daguerreotypes made within a narrow network of enthusiasts (mostly drawn from the same audience) whose production was spurred on by professional competition.[19]

Fizeau was not, in fact, the first to chemically etch and print from daguerreotypes. He was preceded by the French physician Alfred-François Donné (1801–78) and the Austrian anatomist Christian Joseph Berres (1796–1844). His experiments with electrotypes coincided with those of the English physicist William Robert Grove (1811–96) and the French optician Charles-Louis Chevalier (1804–59).[20] These latter two scientists benefitted, like Fizeau, from the late-eighteenth-century electrochemical

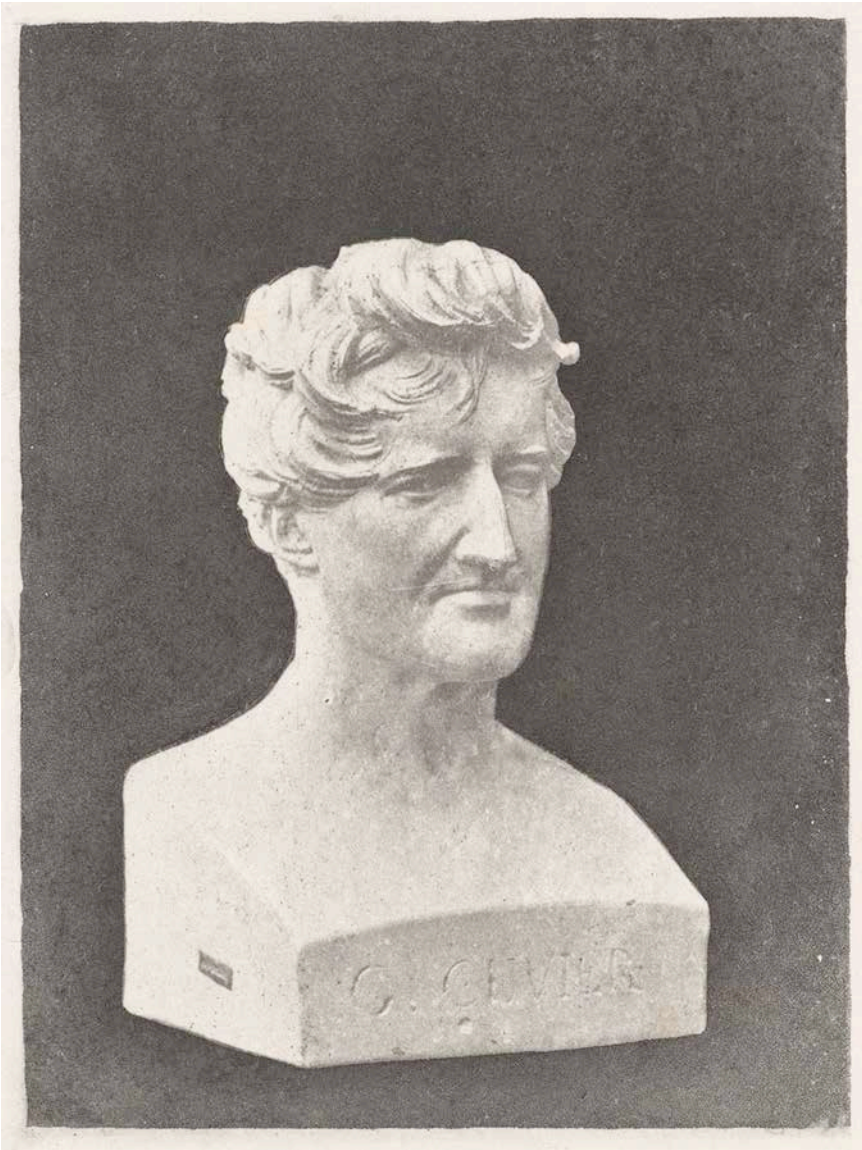

Figure 1.3 Hippolyte Fizeau and Noël Paymal Lerebours, Bust of Georges Cuvier, after David d'Angers, 1841–4, photographic engraving. Image: 3 ¾ × 2 ¹³⁄₁₆ in (9.5 × 7.1 cm). The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library (106PH1349.017). Reproduced with the permission of The New York Public Library. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/084effd0-1e64-0137-ae90-4989b64c47df.

Figure 1.4 Hippolyte Fizeau and Noël Paymal Lerebours, *Cimex lectularius*, 1841–4, photographic engraving. Image: 3 ⅝ x 2 ¹³⁄₁₆ in (9.2 x 7.1 cm). The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library (106PH1349.015). Reproduced with the permission of The New York Public Library. https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/a7460390-2289-0132-5141-58d385a7bbd0.

experiments of two Italian physicists, Luigi Galvani (1737–98) and Alessandro Volta (1745–1827). Volta's subsequent development of the voltaic pile, or electric battery, originated from what was then called *galvanism*, in recognition of Galvani, whose research began with bioelectrical experiments on the bodies of dissected animals.[21] Their work consequently spawned new industries and vocabularies.

The various commercial and industrial uses of electrical apparatus as applied to printing and metal-plating industries in the 1840s came to be called *electrotyping* or *galvanoplasty*; *electroplating* was the term used for the process of plating metal objects through electrolysis (including, eventually, daguerreotype plates), whereas *galvanography* generally came to be associated with graphic applications. Whatever the term, it is not too much of a stretch to understand how these various processes, which traced their origins to bioelectricity and were often directed at producing identical multiples, were understood through the concept of biological reproduction, especially when combined with photography. Electricity shared many of photography's personalities as well as some of its developmental tendencies, including multiple claims of invention, networked associations and an unstable vocabulary.[22] The term *reproduction*, then, came only indirectly to photography. It came to it by way of electricity and the intersection of electricity with entomology.

Shutterbugs

In 1836, the gentleman scientist Andrew Crosse (1784–1855), of Fyne Court, Somerset—known locally as the 'thunder and lightning man'—conducted an experiment in electro-crystallization and obtained unusual results.[23] On the 26th day of his tests, small insects began to appear from out of the rocks on which he was experimenting. Over the course of the next several weeks, the insects, later identified as mites, began to crawl and multiply. As news of this unlikely event spread, Crosse was accused of heresy, despite the fact that he never claimed to be, or know, the exact cause of the mites' birth. Yet even in the face of 'so much virulence and abuse, so much calumny and misrepresentation', he continued to repeat his experiments, and his 'electric mites' were displayed for the next several years; their origin and precise identification remain a mystery to this day.[24]

It might seem idiosyncratic to introduce this episode here, but entomology developed in the nineteenth century as a scientific discipline alongside electricity and photography, and all three practices (and sometimes all three at the same time) were equally manifest in one form or another as recreational entertainments.[25] All three also were linked through the popular imaginary to themes of regeneration and, ultimately, reproduction.[26] Indeed, we could claim all three fields as types of media following Jussi Parrikka's expanded model. For Parikka, the concept of media extends beyond human-oriented technology to the world of insects and the entirety of nature, which he sees as a dynamic, creative network of transmission and connection: 'Media are a contraction of forces of the world into specific resonating milieus.'[27] In this light it is not surprising that Andrew Crosse came to be seen, albeit anachronistically, as the progenitor of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (his 'insects' appeared some twenty years after her monster).[28] Nor is it surprising that a bug (Figure 1.4) appears among Fizeau's

photographic engravings, even if the identification of it as a bed bug might strike us today as a peculiar choice for popular scientific study.[29]

In the nineteenth century, however, it was quite common to see fleas, flies and bed bugs, enlarged and projected through the oxyhydrogen microscope, in popular scientific entertainments in venues like the National Gallery of Practical Science, or Adelaide Gallery, which opened in London in 1832.[30] In addition, spectators would have recognized the insects and bugs. Indeed, Georges Cuvier, in his classic work from 1817, *Le Règne Animal* (*The Animal Kingdom*), claimed that the bed bug was too well known to warrant description, even though the domesticated dog received an entire page of exposition.[31] Insects and arthropods also appeared in the earliest experiments with photography and related technologies that used electricity and microscopy. In March 1839, Samuel Morse famously described Daguerre's view of a spider magnified by a solar microscope as giving naturalists 'a new kingdom to explore'.[32] Among the first prints that Alfred Donné made from daguerreotypes and presented to the Académie des Sciences in October of 1839 was a microscopic view of a fly's eye.[33] Donné was the first to apply the oxyhydrogen flame (or limelight) to photography and, in his work with Léon Foucault (1819–68), was probably the first to employ electric light as well.[34] Donné's microscope was manufactured by Charles Chevalier, who several years earlier had worked with the entomologist Alexandre-Louis Léfèbvre (1798–1867) to develop the *mégagraphe*, a type of microscope adapted as an aid to drawing insects.[35] Chevalier's father, Vincent, showed photographs of microscopic images to the Académie twice in 1840,[36] with his daguerreotype of the *Acarus Scabiei* (the itch mite that causes scabies) provoking a long response from the celebrated botanical illustrator Pierre Jean François Turpin (1775–1840).[37] While Turpin praised the overall exactitude of Daguerre's process, he nevertheless criticized its application to objects of natural history. In Turpin's assessment, microscopically enlarged insects appeared in daguerreotypes as mere shadows or silhouettes and he compared the prints made from them to *épreuves d'essui* or the messy impressions pulled by printmakers to clean their plates of ink. The original daguerreotype from which Fizeau made his engraving of a bed bug has not been located, but when compared to Turpin's own highly detailed renderings (see, for example, Figure 1.5), the print indeed might be considered 'soft, without detail, without effect'.[38]

Turpin, it turns out, had also issued a scathing rebuke to Andrew Crosse upon receipt of one of his specimens for study in 1837.[39] Likening the arachnid to a microscopic porcupine and belittling its supposed 'new mode of origin', Turpin christened it *Acarus horridus*, the horrible mite.[40] He also produced a detailed drawing (Figure 1.5) depicting a female specimen complete with its unhatched egg, evidence that the species' reproduction was dependent on sexual differentiation, coupling and fecundation. Turpin concluded that similarly 'astonishing discoveries' should be kept quiet until verified by competent scientists, certain that Crosse's mite would suffer the fate of other supposedly spontaneously generated organisms and disappear, like 'phantoms no longer able to withstand the light of veritable and constant observation'.[41]

In retrospect, it is difficult not to read Turpin's tirade as a rehearsal for his later reaction to prints made from daguerreotypes. After all, Crosse's horrible mites appeared spontaneously in the dark, electrified into existence like some proto-photographic

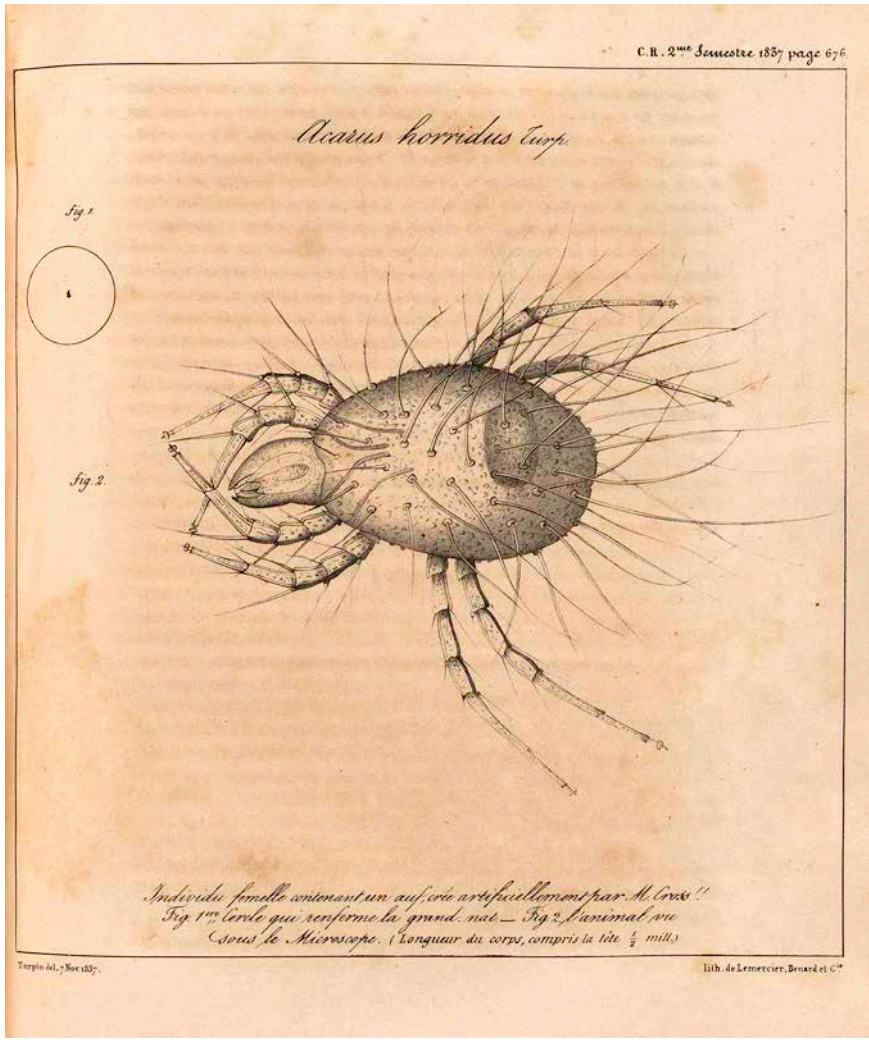

Figure 1.5 Pierre Turpin, Acarus horridus, 1837, lithograph by unknown artist after a drawing by Turpin. Caption: "Female specimen containing an egg, artificially created by Mr. Cross [sic]!! Fig 1ere. Circle enclosing the actual size. Fig. 2 the animal seen under the microscope. (length of body, including the head ½ mill. [millimeter])." Plate size: 19.3 × 18.3 cm. From *Comptes rendus de l' Académie des sciences* 5 (13 November 1837), p. 676. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Joyce F. Menschel Photography Library, NH1.C666. Image courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

media.[42] If Fizeau's bed bug is among their progeny, then perhaps the work's relative obscurity proves Turpin's point about the unsuitability of the daguerreotype to natural history. On the other hand, ongoing and recent debates about Crosse's mite prove that Turpin was wrong about its longevity in scientific discourse.[43] Maybe he was mistaken about the reproduction of daguerreotypes, too. Rather than seeing such episodes as

'bugs' in the system, perturbations that confound conventional histories of electricity, entomology and photography, we should instead accept such variations as evidence of a past teeming with unexplored relationships among unexpected media.[44] In the early 1840s, Fizeau presented the exceedingly common bed bug in a startling new visual format and then reproduced it. In response, the world—as if by some electric shock or infestation—caught the bug for photography.

This essay, dedicated to Henri Zerner, originated from a short talk given at Harvard University on 1 May 2015 in honour of his retirement from the Department of History of Art and Architecture.

Notes

1 'Specimens of the Earliest Photographic Experiments of Fox Talbot and the French School of Daguerre from the possession of Hippolyte Louis Fizeau.' Originally in the Rare Books Division, the material is now housed in the Photography Collection of the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs and has just recently been digitized; Universal Unique Identifier (UUID): b16793b0-0903-0136-e519-7b2b6ffacf6d. I am extremely grateful to Zulay Chang, Elizabeth Cronin and Jessica Keister for facilitating the digitization of this material.

2 For the classic account, see Douglas Crimp, 'The Museum's Old/The Library's New Subject', *Parachute* 22 (Spring 1981): 32–7.

3 Noël Paymal Lerebours, *Excursions daguerriennes: Vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe* (Paris: Rittner et Goupil, 1840–4). For more on Lerebours see below and note 17.

4 Henri Zerner, 'Gustave Le Gray, Heliographer-Artist', in *Gustave Le Gray, 1820–1884* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2002), 210–12.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 E. P. Goldschmidt & Co., 'A unique collection of "photogenic drawings," "calotype photos," "photographic engravings" etc.; specimens of the earliest photographic experiments of Fox Talbot and the French School of Daguerre from the possession of Hippolyte Louis Fizeau' (undated). Both Beaumont Newhall and Helmut Gernsheim kept mimeographic copies of the six-page typescript, which are now in the collections of the Eastman Museum Library and the Ransom Center Photography Collection, respectively. Both copies indicate that the New York Public Library purchased the collection in December 1936.

8 Current research into early methods of photographic reproduction is being undertaken mostly by photo conservators, who are interested in recreating historic processes. Martin Jürgens, at the Rijksmuseum, is the leading proponent of this research and has an active database of works by Fizeau and other pioneers. Jürgens has located approximately one hundred prints attributed to Fizeau, excluding the prints that were made for *Excursions daguerriennes* (see note 17), and about thirty etched daguerreotype plates. I am grateful to him for sharing this research. See also Maria Bonetti, 'Daguerreian Pictures. From Silver to Paper', *Daguerreotype Journal* 1 (June 2014): 30–43 and Malcolm Daniel, 'Journal d'une invention: les

débuts de l'héliogravure en France' in John Goodman et al. (eds), *Graver la lumière: L'héliogravure d'Alfred Stieglitz à nos jours, ou la reconquête d'un instrument perdu* (Vevey: Fondation William Cuendet & Atelier de Saint-Prex, 2001), 79–95.

9 Getty no. 84.XO.1053. At some point in the past, the Getty's eight examples (designated as 'direct-etch' prints) were gathered together as an album, suggesting that they might have been presented as a group of samples. There is no generally agreed-upon name for Fizeau's prints, which are also referred to as photogravures and etchings. The 'unstable vocabulary' that marked photography's first decade still holds true today for these works, as well as for the plates from which they were printed. One of the prints in the NYPL collection (106PH1349.023) has 'Gravure photographique' etched below the image (see note 16), which is also how the process is referred to in Fizeau's patent application (see note 10). 'Photographic engraving' was likely Fizeau's intended name for a commercial process that never came to fruition; I use the term in this chapter to specify his process.

10 The most comprehensive resource is Gabriele Chiesa and Paolo Gosio, *Dagherrotipia, Ambrotipia, Ferrotipia: Positivi unici e processi antichi nel ritratto fotografico* (Brescia: youcanprint.it, 2013), 321–47; also available online at http://www.gri.it/daguereotype-hallmarks-punzoni.html (accessed 25 March 2020). For Fizeau's patent for a process of 'photographic engraving', registered on 2 February 1844, see the archives of the Académie des sciences/Institut de France, fonds 64J, Hippolyte Fizeau, dossier 8.02; reproduced in James Lequeux, *Hippolyte Fizeau, physician de la lumière* (Les Ulis, France: EDP Sciences, 2014), 8.

11 Abbé François-Napoléon-Marie Moigno, 'Photographie, son histoire, ses procédés, sa théorie', *Revue scientifique et industrielle* 30 (1847): 277. The number '20' is also visible on one of the photographic engravings.

12 Fizeau published a brief description of the process in 1844; Hippolyte Fizeau, 'Note sur un procédé de gravure photographique', *Comptes rendus de l' Académie des sciences* (CRAS) 19 (8 July 1844): 119–21.

13 On Jacobi, see Herbert Heinrich, 'The Discovery of Galvanoplasty and Electrotyping', *Journal of Chemical Education* 15, no. 12 (1938): 565–75. For a general history, see Alfred Smee, *Elements of Electro-metallurgy* (London: E. Palmer, 1843).

14 In three separate meetings of the Académie des Sciences, François Arago reported that Fizeau (1) electroplated a daguerreotype (without harming the original plate); (2) electroplated the 'first reproduction' obtained in his original experiment and (3) made multiple *contre-épreuves* ('counter-proofs', what we would now call electrotypes) from the same original daguerreotype. See (1) CRAS 12 (1 March 1841), 401–2; (2) CRAS 12 (15 March 1841), 509 and (3) CRAS 12 (24 May 1841), 957. Fizeau's electrotype production in 1841 has sometimes been confused with his later experimentation with photographic engraving (examples of which were first shown to the Académie des sciences on 13 February 1843), thereby leading to uncertainty about dating the latter. Already in 1925, for example, Georges Potonniée stated that Arago reported on Fizeau's initial engraving attempts in March 1841. See *Potonniée, Histoire de la découverte de la photographie* (Paris: Paul Montel, 1925), 264. The most thorough recent exploration of the application of electroplating to daguerreotypes, including attempts to recreate nineteenth-century methods, is by Magdalena Pilko, who notes the variety of terms used to describe the resulting product beginning in 1841; Pilko, *Electrotyping Daguerreotypes: Reconstruction of an Early Reproduction Technique*, MA thesis

(University of Amsterdam, 2017), 'Terminology', Appendix 1, 61. Available online at http://www.scriptiesonline.uba.uva.nl/scriptie/635792 (accessed 1 July 2020).

15 'Portrait du Hurlimann graveur' is inscribed in ink below the image; NYPL Photography Collection 106PH1349.010. The rest of the portraits currently remain unidentified. Fizeau also worked with the engravers Augustin-François Lemaître and Louis-Henri Brévière. On Hurlimann, see Louis Figuier, *Les Merveilles de la science ou description populaire des inventions modernes* (Paris: Jouvet et Cie., 1869), 142–4. A fifteenth portrait is dedicated in ink from Henri Victor Regnault (1810–78), the French chemist and photographer, to Fizeau (NYPL 106PH1349, Folder D). Some of these portraits might be associated with the studio of Antoine Claudet, who held the licence for Fizeau's engraving process in England. For Claudet, see Karen Hellman, *Antoine Claudet, A Figure of Photography* (PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2010), 74–7.

16 Mercuri and Achille Ricourt (1797–1879), the editor of *L'Artiste*, where the engraving was published in 1833, were defendants that same year in a lawsuit in which Robert accused them of forgery. The court ruled against Robert. See 'Police Corectionelle de Paris… Procès à l'occasion du tableau des moissonneurs dans les marais Pontins, entre M. Ricourt, directeur de l'Artiste, et M. Robert', *Gazette des Tribunaux*, no. 2305 (3 January 1833): 213. Interestingly, Mercuri is credited, along with Fizeau and Hurlimann, on one of the two photographic engravings in the NYPL collection (106PH1349.023); Robert is not.

17 The photographic engraving of the bas-relief of *The Funeral of the Virgin* was inserted by Lerebours, along with two other prints made through Fizeau's photographic engraving process, into some editions of the second volume of his *Excursions daguerriennes*. The source of the original statue of the Virgin Mary has not yet been identified; for their help in specifying its iconography, I thank Henri Zerner and Isabelle Saint Martin. More research needs to be done to identify other sources of Fizeau's works.

18 Although the Goldschmidt catalogue summary identifies the micrograph as a daguerreotype by Foucault of an epidermal cell reproduced by Potonniée, *Histoire de la découverte*, 239, it is a different image. Donné states in 1845 that although he intended to use Fizeau's process to illustrate his book, it wasn't yet precise enough; see Alfred Donné, *Cours de microscopie complémentaire des études médicales: anatomie microscopique et physiologie des fluides de l'économie* (Paris: J.-B. Baillière, 1845), 13–14.

19 In France, this competition was institutionalized by the Société pour l'encouragement de l'industrie nationale beginning in 1842, with awards being offered for methods to both fix and duplicate the daguerreotype image. Fizeau was recognized respectively, in 1842 and 1844, for his work in both fields. See Armand-Pierre Séguier, 'Rapport sur le concours pour le perfectionnement de la photographie', *Bulletin de la Société pour l'encouragement de l'industrie nationale* no. 526 (April 1848): 195–200.

20 For a contemporaneous historical summary of photographic engraving, see J. M. Herman Hammann, *Des Arts graphiques destinés à multiplier par l'impression, considérés sous le double point de vue historique et pratique* (Geneva: J. Cherbuliez, 1857), 412–20. For the most thorough account of Berres, see Martin Jürgens, Ioannis Vasallos and Lénia Fernandes, 'Joseph Berres's *Phototyp*: Printing Photography in the Service of Science', *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 66, no. 2 (2018): 144–69. Available online at http://www.jstor.org/stable/26444273 (accessed 1 July 2020).

21 See Marcello Pera, *The Ambiguous Frog: The Galvani-Volta Controversy on Animal Electricity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

22 For the 'discursive instability' of galvanism, see Walter Moser, 'Le galvanisme: Joker au carrefour des discours et des savoirs autour de 1800', in Olivier Asselin (ed.), *L'ère électrique. The Electric Age* (Ottawa: Ottawa University Press, 2011), 61–84; available online at http://books.openedition.org/uop/394 (accessed 1 July 2020). On the patenting of electricity, see Rhys Morus, *Frankenstein's Children: Electricity, Exhibition, and Experiment in Early-Nineteenth-Century London* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 164–93.

23 For a summary of the experiments, see Brian Wright, *Andrew Crosse and the Mite That Shocked the World: The Life and Work of an Electrical Pioneer* (Leicester: Troubador, 2015) and Morus, *Frankenstein's Children*, 139–43.

24 For Crosse's quotation, see his letter dated 27 December 1837 and read on 29 January 1838 at the London Electrical Society, 'Description of Some Experiments Made with the Voltaic Battery', in *The Transactions and the Proceedings of the London Electrical Society*, from 1837 to 1840 (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1841), 10–16 (irregular pagination). On the exhibition and attempted identification of the mites, see Wright, *Andrew Crosse*, 118, 158–9, 166.

25 See, for example, Deirdre Coleman, 'Entertaining Entomology: Insects and Insect Performers in the Eighteenth Century', in *Eighteenth-Century Life* 30, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 107–84 and Morus, *Frankenstein's Children*, especially 175, on the parallel development of electrometallurgy and photography.

26 For an enquiry into photography's ghost-like ability to deny death under the guise of a perpetual present, see Geoffrey Batchen, *Forget Me Not: Photography and Remembrance* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004).

27 Jussi Parikka, *Insect Media: An Archaeology of Animals and Technology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), xiv.

28 Wright, *Andrew Crosse*, 52–5. On Frankenstein and the Volta/Galvani debate, see Richard C. Sha, 'Volta's Battery, Animal Electricity, and Frankenstein', *European Romantic Review* 23, no. 1 (February 2012): 21–41.

29 I admit some queasiness when, in response to an email enquiry, Randall 'Toby' Schuh, curator emeritus at the American Museum of Natural History and specialist in *Heteroptera*, or 'true bugs', identified the subject in question as belonging to the family *Cimicidae*, and specifically the species *Cimex lectularius*, more commonly known as the bed bug.

30 Kentwood D. Wells, 'Fleas the Size of Elephants: the Wonders of the Oxyhydrogen Microscope', *The Magic Lantern Gazette* 29, no. 2/3 (Summer/Fall 2017): 3–34.

31 Georges Cuvier, 'Les chiens domestiques (*Canis familiaris* L.)', *Le règne animal distribué d'après son organization* vol. 1 (Paris, Déterville, 1829): 149–50 and 'La Punaise des lits (*Cimex lectularius* Lin.)', vol. 3, 393. For the universality of bed bugs from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century, see L. O. J. Boynton, 'The Bed Bug in the Age of Elegance', *Furniture History* 1 (1965): 15–31.

32 Samuel F. B. Morse, 'The Daguerrotipe. [*sic*]', *New-York Observer* 17, no. 16 (April 20, 1839): 62.

33 CRAS 9 (14 October 1839), 485.

34 CRAS 10 (17 February 1840), 288–9. On his work with Foucault, see Gabriel Richet, 'Daguerre, Donné et Foucault, trois franc-tireurs créent la microphotographie', *médecine/sciences* 13 (1997): 45–8.

35 CRAS 10 (16 March 1840), 478–9. Chevalier presented this instrument, which he later retrofitted with daguerreotype equipment, to the Société entomologique in 1836.
36 Ibid. CRAS 10 (6 April 1840), 583.
37 Ibid., 'Sur l'application du Daguerréotype relativement à la représentation des objets d'histoire naturelle', CRAS 10 (13 April 1840), 587–94.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid., 'Note sur un espèce d'Acarus présentée à l'Académie, dans sa séance du 30 octobre, par M. Robertson, a qui M. Cross [*sic*] l'avait communiquée', CRAS 5 (13 November 1837), 668–76.
40 Numerous neologisms were applied to Crosse's mite, including *Acarus crossii*, *Acarus galvani* and *Acarus electricus*; see Wright, *Andrew Crosse*, 132.
41 Turpin, 'Note sur un espèce d'Acarus', 674.
42 For more on media as insects and insect-like models of media, see Parikka, *Insect Media*.
43 The problem of identifying Crosse's mite was taken up as recently as 2010, and slides on which specimens were mounted were reported on in 2012. See Wright, *Andrew Crosse*, 158–9.
44 See Parikka, *Insect Media*, 62: 'The perturbations stemming both from the milieu and from the agent are what provides, or affords, the functionality of any agency, any assemblage. Here perturbations, variations, and "bugs" are not the elements that need to be excluded from a functional system but what provide it with a lived relationship and "life," so to speak.' Thomas Alva Edison, who invented, among other things, the electric light bulb, seems to have been the first person to use 'bug' in this way. See Francis Arthur Jones, *Thomas Alva Edison: Sixty Year of an Inventor's Life* (New York: T.Y. Crowell & Company, 1908), 250–1.

2

Casting History: The Role of Photography and Plaster Casting in the Creation of a Colonial Archive

Sarah Victoria Turner

The first image encountered in Henry Hardy Cole's (1843–1916) folio-sized book *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi,* published in 1872 is an unusual and striking one (Figure 2.1).[1] A large photographic print, the image vividly renders a scene of the manufacture of architectural plaster casts in colonial India. The photograph arrests a moment in a campaign of plaster cast making in India that Cole himself supervised in the winter of 1869–70. At the compositional centre of the image is a British army officer (this is presumably Cole, then a lieutenant with the Royal Engineers, although the caption to the photograph describes the scene as 'Group of Moulders at Work in the Kutb.'), dressed in a pith helmet and holding a swagger stick, observing a team of Indian workmen making casts of the pillars of the colonnade of the Qutb Minar, a complex of religious structures begun in the twelfth century in the south of Delhi. Three other Indian men, seemingly dressed in the army uniform of the British Raj, are stationed in the background of this scene. The photograph stills the fluid movements required to transform dusty particles of plaster of Paris into a viscous liquid for pouring into piece moulds.[2] The poses of the various bodies are purposefully paused in their work for the special event of the taking of a photograph, and yet the photograph does not succeed in fully freezing time nor motion.

A slight blur, especially around the figure of the *bhisti* (the water pourer), takes us back to the real time of this event, making it easy for us to picture this *tableaux vivant* of plaster cast makers resuming the rhythms of their work, the patient labours of brushing, bending, pouring, dripping, watching, waiting, drying. The white liquid plaster running down the wooden box, which supports one of the moulds, alerts the reader of Cole's book to the raw materiality of making plaster casts. This image renders visible something of the complex labours, processes and relationships required to produce plaster replicas of this ancient and complex architectural sculpture. It also speaks of an awe that perhaps both Cole and the photographer, Charles Shepherd (of the already then-well-known Indian photographic firm Bourne and Shepherd), shared in the transformative ability of the reproductive processes of both plaster casting and photography to turn liquid materials into solid forms that could be transported, preserved and shared well beyond the sites of their making.

Figure 2.1 Charles Shepherd, 'Group of Moulders', 1869–70, carbon print. From *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi, Especially the Buildings around the Kutb Minar*, by Henry Hardy Cole, Lieutenant R. E., Late Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of the North Western Provinces, India (London: Arundel Society, 1872). Reproduced with the permission of the Philadelphia Museum of Art Library and Archives.

I am using this photograph to think about the important relations and rivalries between the reproductive technologies of plaster casting and photography as they were developed, theorized and increasingly used in tandem by nineteenth-century museums, curators, archaeologists and historians to create an archive – albeit an archive of fragments – of art and architectural objects from across the globe.[3] The publication of *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi* was sponsored by the offices of the South Kensington Museum, now the Victoria and Albert Museum, in London, with the support of the Arundel Society for Promoting the Knowledge of Art. The project was carried out with support from the British authorities in colonial India, including the British Army, to which Cole belonged. The South Kensington Museum was not alone in collecting plaster copies to rapidly expand its collections, and similar projects were developed at museums such as the Trocadéro in Paris and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.[4] Plaster casts were celebrated in the nineteenth century as 'the medium par excellence for teaching and disseminating historical architecture' and as 'ideal exhibits rather than second-class substitutes'.[5]

However, by the middle of the twentieth century, many cast collections had been dismantled. Despite the extensive collections of the Cast Courts still extant at the Victoria and Albert Museum, much of the South Asian plaster cast collection was

destroyed in the 1950s.[6] Indeed, the plaster casts being made in Shepherd's photograph no longer exist at the Museum. The removal, and sometimes destruction, of these plaster cast collections also resulted in the eradication of the historical interaction of the reproductive technologies of plaster and photography, which, undoubtedly – however partially – had rapidly expanded the European view of other cultures' monuments and artefacts through the medium of the copy in the nineteenth century.[7] As museological photographic archives became more expansive and embedded within cultural institutions, plaster cast collections were, conversely, removed from view for reasons that included space-saving reorganizations of rapidly expanding museums and feelings of embarrassment about world-class museums being filled with copies.

Cole's Indian casting campaigns demonstrate the role of the plaster cast in circulating aesthetic knowledge, particularly within colonial museums and art schools. The plaster cast copy played an important, if somewhat short-lived, role within colonial networks of collecting, archaeological exploration and museological display, supported, affirmed and maintained by a burgeoning archive of reports, drawn illustrations, photographs and descriptive texts. It existed in a 'reproductive continuum' as Malcolm Baker has observed in his work on the South Kensington cast courts.[8] In bringing photography and plaster casts back together, this case study of Cole's plaster casting project and Shepherd's photographs highlights the symbiotic cultures of plaster and photographic copying (in other words, copying in three- and two-dimensional forms) that created a new world of art reproduction in the second half of the nineteenth century, not just in Europe, but also globally. As Mari Lending has observed in her recent work on plaster casts of architectural monuments: 'Monuments travel across media and materials, in space and time, producing complex entanglements of copies and originals.'[9] I am arguing here that, in researching the 'technomaterial complexity' of these nineteenth-century reproductive casting-photographing projects, we can gain richer understanding of the conceptualization of the relationships, of the 'entanglements', between copies and originals, objects and images, metropolis and colony in the nineteenth century, and beyond.[10]

Casting campaigns: Henry Hardy Cole at Sanchi and Delhi

Henry Hardy Cole supervised two casting projects in the winter of 1869–70.[11] As Tapati Guha-Thakurta's work has discussed, the first of these was at the Buddhist stupa at Sanchi, dating from the third century BCE and situated in the state of Madhya Pradesh, and the second was at the Qutb complex in Delhi described above. Attached to the Royal Engineers in India until his retirement in 1895 at the rank of lieutenant colonel and also the surveyor of the Northwestern Provinces of India (1868–71), Cole convinced his superiors in the Government of India to allow him to undertake the casting work and share the not-insignificant cost of these reproductions with the South Kensington Museum. The purpose of these casting projects was to make what Cole described as a series of 'structural facsimiles' in plaster which could then be transported from their original site in India to the museums of European cities of London, Paris, Brussels, Edinburgh and Dublin, as well as for exhibition and display in the growing network of colonial art schools and museums in India. Cole was particularly keen on the latter, lamenting the cheap copies of European artworks that filled many collections in India,

instead of containing good examples of Indian art and architecture for students and visitors to appreciate. Both plaster and photography were more easily portable than the original architecture and sculpture were, and these casting projects coincided with a new period in the colonial archaeological regime which advocated, in some circles at least, leaving monuments in situ.[12]

As Kavita Singh has noted, collections of original antiquities were not always removed by the nineteenth century Raj administration. When the Begum of Bhopal, in whose princely state the stupa stood, offered to dismantle a gateway from the Sanchi stupa as a 'gift' to be placed in a London museum, 'her offer was politely refused' by the museum and plaster copies were made instead.[13] The genesis of the multi-media approach to recording the monuments in Sanchi and Delhi can be traced to Henry Hardy Cole's father, Henry Cole (1808–82). In 1866, Sir Henry Cole, secretary of the Science and Art Department and director of the South Kensington Museum, enquired as to the means of collecting illustrations of Indian architecture (in lieu of originals) by means of photography, plans and casts for his growing museum. In the following year, the princes of several European states signed the 'Convention for Promoting Universally Reproduction of Works of Art for the Benefit of all Countries', which was signed at the Paris International Exhibition of 1867.[14] The convention stated that 'throughout the world every country possesses fine Historical Monuments of Art of its own, which can easily be reproduced by Casts, Electrotypes, Photographs and other processes, without the slightest damage to the originals'. In a report dated 'February 1870, Camp Sanchi', Cole set out with precision the itinerary, costs and processes involved in making a full-sized plaster replica of the main gateway of Sanchi.[15] Most of the materials were shipped from London. Before leaving for India, Cole and three assistants, all Royal Engineers, spent several weeks with Giovanni Franchi, one of the most renowned purveyors and makers of plaster reproductions and electrotypes in Britain at the time.[16] On 20 October 1869, Cole left London, and he arrived in Calcutta on 26 November, accompanied by Sergeant Bullen and Corporals Heath and Jackson of the Royal Engineers. Eighty-eight boxes, containing twenty-eight tons of material, arrived at Sanchi on 24 December 1869, a scene of such incredible human and animal labour that it was captured in a painting by an unknown artist and displayed at the South Kensington Museum from 1874 (Figure 2.2).[17] On his arrival, Cole 'found that the Begum of Bhopal had sent a tehseeldar [an official] to assist in procuring coolies, scaffolding, &c., and already a quantity of bamboos, rope and other requisite material had been collected at the village'.[18] Apparently causing great excitement amongst the people living round Bhopal and Bhilsa, according to Cole's report, he received a steady stream of parties requesting to look at the casts drying in tents. The casting (consisting of 112 separate pieces) was completed on 21 February 1870.

Once the modellers' work was successfully underway at Sanchi, Cole left to carry out the casting at Delhi. Whilst the Sanchi project is recorded in minute detail in the reports of the Northwestern provinces survey, it was the Delhi project to which Cole devoted an impressive book, filled with prints of Shepherd's images made by using the expensive and innovative Woodburytype printing process and the Autotype photographic process (Figures 2.3 and 2.4), presumably thanks to the financial support of the Arundel Society.[19] Consistent with Cole's fascination with the ornamentation

Figure 2.2 Unattributed (origin: India), *Transporting of Materials from Jabalpur to Sanchi*, 1870–74, oil on canvas, 122.5 × 183.5 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London (IPN.904), ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

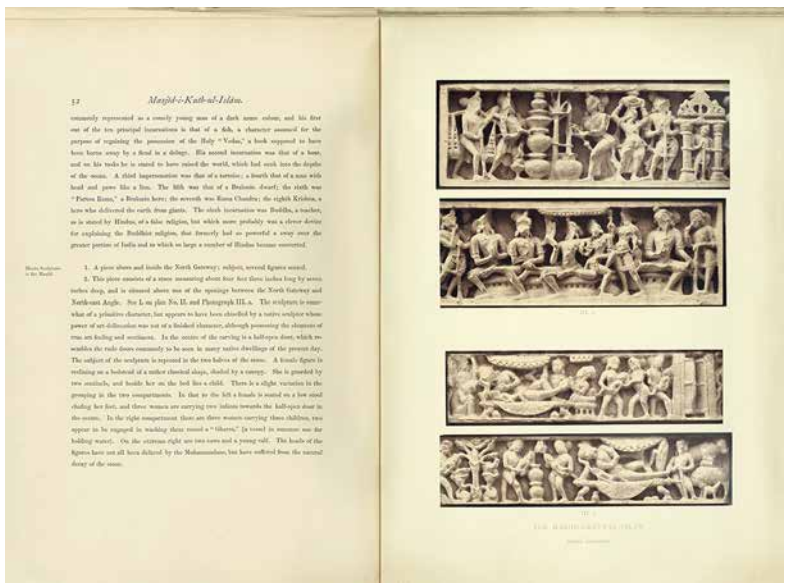

Figure 2.3 Charles Shepherd, 'III.A & III.B. The Masjid-Kuth-ul-Islam.' 'Hindu Sculpture', 1869–70, carbon print. From *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi, Especially the Buildings around the Kutb Minar*, by Henry Hardy Cole, Lieutenant R. E., Late Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of the North Western Provinces, India (London: Arundel Society, 1872). Reproduced with the permission of the Philadelphia Museum of Art Library and Archives.

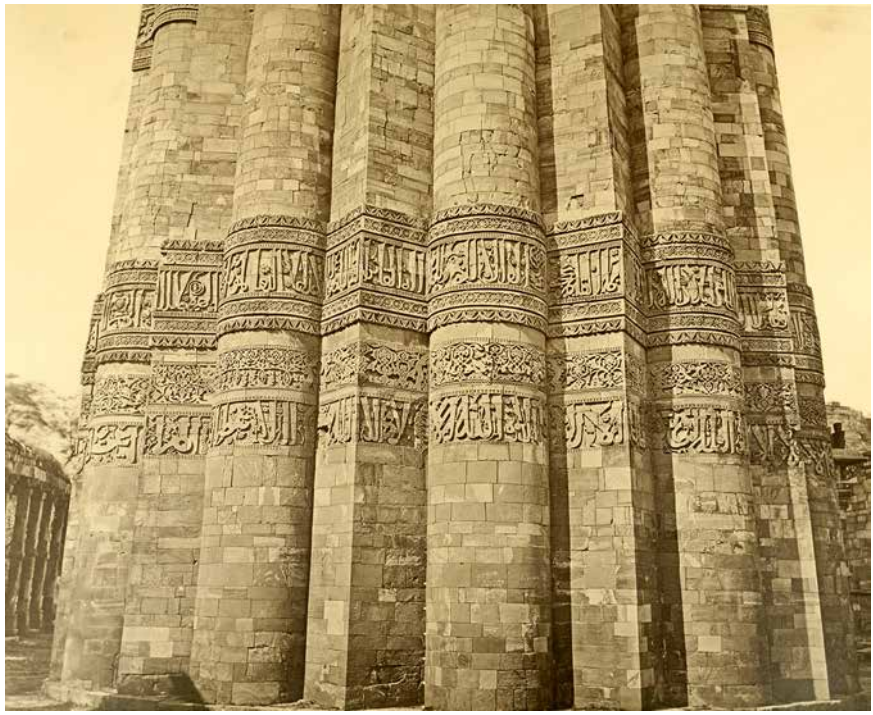

Figure 2.4 Charles Shepherd, 'Section of the Kutb Minar', 1869–70, carbon print. From *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi, Especially the Buildings around the Kutb Minar*, by Henry Hardy Cole, Lieutenant R. E., Late Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of the North Western Provinces, India (London: Arundel Society, 1872). Reproduced with the permission of the Philadelphia Museum of Art Library and Archives.

at this site, Shepherd created carefully lit and composed images that focus in on the materiality and texture of the architectural detail. Shepherd's photographs, as reproduced in Cole's book, refute the flattening logic of the two-dimensional image. Instead, the Woodburytype and Autotype prints evoke the three dimensionality of the Qutb Minar's architecture and perform their own kind of casting through the materials of light, pigments, organic products, metal and paper. The Woodburytype process was in fact a kind of 'photorelief relief' printing which also used gelatine to make relief mould. Woodburytype prints were valued for their stability and resistance to fading and were often used for special edition printing of books and magazines between 1864 and 1910.[20]

Cole's few words of homage to Shepherd in the text are the only record we have of his role in the project. As Maria Antonella Pelizarri comments, in the archives and records we have of the casting of the architecture of South Asia, the photographer is, more often than not, an 'invisible actor in a scene of transformation of architecture into replica'.[21] Yet, if the photographer was invisible, the photograph of the casting of the

colonnades nevertheless makes the actual labour of copying very visible (remember this was reproduced as the first photograph (see Figure 2.1) in Cole's book). As Elizabeth Edwards writes, a photograph is not simply 'of' an event, but *is* the event.[22] The event of making architectural copies—the gathered personnel of mould makers, plaster casters, labourers, superintendent, photographer—all are bound together in this one image. For Cole this is a manifesto of the joint effort, the co-endeavour of the plaster cast and photography working together to preserve and document architectural heritage.

In his introduction to *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, Henry Hardy Cole stated that the projects of plaster casting and photographing the buildings in the Qutb complex in Delhi had been conceived of as a joint endeavour:

> By a previous arrangement Mr Shepherd, of the firm of Messrs. Shepherd and Bourne, came to the Kutb [*sic*] to take a set of photographs of the most interesting buildings, and these are here published by order of the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education, to form a collateral series of illustrations to the casts exhibited at the South Kensington Museum.[23]

Interestingly, in Cole's formulation the photographs are conceived of as 'collateral', implying that they were employed here as something of a parallel medium – as a reproductive technology of a different, but related, kind. However, we could also understand the term collateral to imply that the photographs were also secondary or subordinate and that despite this interrelation, Cole always conceived of the casts as the superior mode of reproduction. Also, in the space of the museum, it would be the true-to-scale three-dimensional casts that would be preeminent, whereas, on the flat page of the book publication, read together with the didactic text, it was the photographs, printed by the London-based Permanent Printing Company, that communicated the purpose and ethos of Cole's project beyond both India and South Kensington. Together, plaster and photography worked to build this colonial archive of reproductions.

For the photographs, Cole wanted detail or, as he put it, 'diagrammatic records, the clear reproduction of structural and ornamental detail'.[24] He was not after the sweeping views or the sublime grandeur for which, as Cole put it, 'Mr Shepherd's instincts and sympathies were inclined'.[25] The purpose of photography, in this case, was not to simply record the work of plaster casting but to do a casting of its own, recording the particular details of surface, site and scene through the imprint of light onto the glass plate of the wet collodion negative. Through casting, replicating, labelling and photographing, Cole envisaged himself as engaged in documenting a history of India which was made manifest through physical structures: 'The history of India is intimately concerned with the ancient monuments of that country. In some cases these monuments are her only reliable records',[26] he wrote, echoing the architectural historian James Fergusson's argument that architecture and its associated sculpture were the only reliable documents in a land where there are 'no written annals which can be trusted'.[27] Cole asserts the power of the colonial copyist to interpret this history and make it more readable and more reliable. Whilst advocating for the preservation in situ of monuments, Cole's castings and photographs performed a removal of

another kind – placing these monuments into an architectural history of India that was written and preserved by the British authorities. The colonialism of art history's methods is starkly apparent here.

The asymmetrical politics of colonial labour abound in both the images and texts of *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*. Whereas Cole recorded the names of the Indian modellers he employed at Sanchi in his report (S. Burnald and Púneswamy, from the Madras School of Industrial Art; Nobin Chander Múkerjí, Bonomali Pal and Khudiram Das, from the Calcutta School of Art; and Gírder, modeller from Agra), regarding the modellers used in Delhi, we are told only that they were soap-stone carvers from Agra and, according to Cole, trained up by him for the task in hand.[28] Casting ancient monuments was, as Cole was eager to point out in his text, disciplined and difficult work. He describes the 'native moulders' as needing constant 'unbroken supervision on the part of some qualified person'. He did not extend the courtesies he had granted to Shepherd for the patience and labour of the numerous Indian craftsmen who were responsible for the actual making of the casts.

The casting of South Asian architecture presented Cole with a number of practical problems which required new technical solutions. The more conventional plaster piece moulding used to make casts of architecture was deemed unsuitable in this context. According to Cole 'such a process is evidently not suitable, in respect of rapidity, to Indian sculptures, which are mostly of a very elaborate character partaking largely of what is technically termed an "undercut" quality and native moulders cannot be trusted to execute any such work alone'. A demand, he writes, was thus created 'for a process which would be not only more easy and quick, but to a great extent would obviate the necessity of manipulating the casts when they issue from the mould'.[29] Gelatine was adopted (a technique he had no doubt learnt from Franchi). Gelatine, a binder made from boiling the bones, skin and cartilage of animals, was used to create a second skin around India's architectural history. Cole thought gelatine moulding was ideal in this situation as these 'big objects' could be 'embraced in one mould' – the flexible and elastic properties of the product reaching into deep recesses and repeating 'every mark and grain' on the surface. It was also, he reported, 'more mechanical than piece moulding, therefore it is easily acquired by natives, who, with ordinary care and under supervision, execute it rapidly and well'.[30] The first photograph in Cole's *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi* is no romantic evocation of native craft skill, but an image of a modern and efficient factory line of repetitive, 'mechanical' tasks. This is what we see in the centre of the photograph – a gelatine mould being prepared and one on a makeshift pedestal which is ready to be cast, the bulging bag of plaster of Paris and the 'bhisti' and other workers standing by, ready to aid this material transformation.

The casts made at the Qutb complex alone weighed six tonnes, a number indicative of the sheer physical labour required to make them. This heavy load joined the Sanchi reproductions and those also made by Corporeal Jackson at Fathpur Sikri, and the whole collection was sent back to England, travelling via the Suez Canal and Liverpool Docks, reaching London well ahead of their spectacular display at the International Exhibition of 1871, held in South Kensington. These pieces which formed the 'parent' casts were fitted together and further casts were made, entering museum collections across Europe.[31]

Exhibiting histories

A photograph taken in 1872 by Isabel Agnes Cowper, the South Kensington Museum's first female in-house photographer, of a room of the Architectural Courts at the South Kensington Museum captures how the installation of these casts looked once they arrived in their new home in South Kensington (the architectural courts opened in 1873), resonating with a new force as officially sanctioned copies of the original monument made 'on site' but granted their authority and scholarly worth 'off-site' in the imperial museum (Figure 2.5). Overshadowing the copy of the throne of Akbar

Figure 2.5 Isabel Agnes Cowper, *Kensington Museum, Eastern Cast Court*, c. 1872, albumen silver print. Image: 27 cm × 25 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London 72507 ©Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

from Fatehpur Sikri – in fact overshadowing everything surrounding it, including the workmen on their precarious platforms – is the full-size cast of the gateway, or *torana*, from the Sanchi. Henry Hardy Cole's hope was that, through these casts, 'Indian architecture, like that of Egypt, Assyria, Greece etc', would be recognized as 'an important part of the History of the World's Art of Building'.[32] The *torana* became perhaps the most famous and celebrated cast in the collection.

The casts did not speak to visitors on their own but were supported by an expanding archive of texts and photographs, captions and guidebooks, a growing cacophony of interpretation. With guidebooks in hand, the nineteenth-century museum visitor could compare and contrast the architectural products of the world, sorting them into aesthetic, social and cultural taxonomies. Henry Hardy Cole wrote one of the first books on Indian art, based on the collection at South Kensington, and his obsessive separation of South Asian art into 'religious types' (Buddhist, Hindu, Jain and Muslim) defined the pattern of scholarship for some time to come.[33] The task of making casts and photographs of Indian monuments was, then, part of the same didactic mission of the survey and preservation of India's past, what anthropologist Bernard Cohn has described as the 'investigative modalities' of British imperialism and its associated forms of colonial knowledge.[34] Through plaster casts, Henry Hardy Cole desired to make a reliable, readable and organized material archive of Indian architectural history, one which was ultimately supervised by the British, and which was based, in his opinion, 'on solid information obtained in fixing dates' rather than 'native writings, which are more often based upon fables and traditions than on authenticated facts'.[35] It was, of course, an archive of fragments and thus a highly fragmented archive (as are all archives, of course). But it was also an impassioned defence of the preservation of Indian monuments in situ and his faith in reproductive copies to disseminate knowledge. This often went against the grain of the colonial authorities which he served. Cole's words to them were often harsh: 'It seems to me *a suicidal and indefensible policy to allow the country to be looted of original art works of ancient art when there exist the means of making facsimiles scarcely distinguishable from the original!*'[36] It is perhaps no surprise that Cole was appointed the first curator of Ancient Monuments in India in 1881, and he was also the last person to hold this title. More expensive folio publications were issued, including reports which included an update on the repairs at Sanchi.[37]

Out casts

The fortunes of Cole's plaster cast project within the museum would become increasingly fragile in the twentieth century. This is highlighted by the removal of the Indian casts from the Victoria and Albert Museum and their subsequent destruction in the 1950s. It is the 'collateral series of images', in the form of Shepherd's photographs, that has provided the more lasting and permanent record, with the book being reprinted in 1872 and digital copies now making it easily accessible online.[38] The mid-nineteenth century witnessed the heyday of the plaster copy, exemplified not only by the South Kensington collections, but also by the monumental, comparative assembly of casts of Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome and elsewhere on display at the Crystal Palace at

Sydenham in 1854. However, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, photography was already beginning to replace plaster as the preferred medium of record and circulation for architectural and archaeological monuments, offering much more materially stable images that were far easier to commission, take, print, reproduce and disseminate at much less cost than the epic military-style campaigns needed to make plaster copies around the world. As photography became an increasingly permanent and affordable medium, the messiness and laboriousness of plaster casting were increasingly apparent.

Such monumental (in all senses) reproductive projects as Cole's were only possible in the nineteenth century through the colonial logistical networks of the British Empire. What might be also interpreted as a kind of colonial monument trophy hunting by European museums also was increasingly critiqued in the twentieth century as empires crumbled, seen as wasteful and unnecessary. Despite their subsequent separation, it is important to demonstrate that plaster copies were, for a time, accorded the authority of the superior reproductive mode with photographs playing the subsidiary role of corroborative evidence. When photographs eventually eclipsed plaster copies, and other reproductive modes, in the twentieth century – a process described by Stephen Bann as 'photographic exceptionalism' – much of this previous, intertwined history was lost.[39] As a result, these monumental replicas were cast out of art and architectural history, returned to the dust from which they were made.

I would like to thank and gratefully acknowledge the helpful advice and suggestions that the co-editors have provided throughout the process of writing this chapter. I am also grateful to colleagues at Delhi University, the South Asia Institute at Columbia University and the Victoria and Albert Museums who gave me invaluable feedback on presentations of the ideas contained within this chapter.

Notes

1 *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi, Especially the Buildings around the Kutb Minar, by Henry Hardy Cole, Lieutenant R.E., Late Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of the North Western Provinces, India* (London: Arundel Society, 1872).

2 A useful and illustrated guide to the plaster-casting process, including gelatine moulding, can be found in Albert Toft's 1911 teaching manual *Modelling and Sculpture* (London: Seeley & Co., 1911).

3 The hope is that this chapter will contribute, along with other publications and the chapters in this book, to a growing appreciation of the interrelation and interaction between reproductive media in the nineteenth century. See also Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters, and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Patrizia Di Bello, *Sculptural Photographs: From the Calotype to Digital Technologies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); Mari Lending, *Plaster Monuments: Architecture and the Power of Reproduction* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017).

4 For more on these collections, see Mari Lending, *Plaster Monuments* and Malcolm Baker, 'Writing about Displays of Sculpture: Historiography and Some Current

Questions', *Les Cahiers de l'École du Louvre* [Online], no. 8 (2016), https://doi.org/10.4000/cel.332 (accessed 1 July 2020); DOI: 10.4000/cel.332.

5 Lending, *Plaster Monuments,* 5. Also see Isabelle Flour, 'On the Formation of a National Museum of Architecture': The Architectural Museum versus the South Kensington Museum', *Architectural History* 51 (2008): 211–38.

6 The casts of Indian architecture were removed in c. 1880 to the opposite side of Exhibition Road to new galleries created for the Indian collections. Cole's casts were destroyed in the 1950s at the same time as the South Asian collections were moved back within the main museum. See Robert Skelton, 'The India Collections: 1798 to 1978', *Burlington Magazine* 902 (1978): 297–304 (p. 301).

7 Lending, *Plaster Monuments.* See also Michael Falser, 'The First Plaster Casts of Angkor for the French métropole: From the Mekong Mission 1866–1868, and the Universal Exhibition of 1867, to the Musée khmer of 1874', *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 99 (2012–2013): 49–92; Rune Frederiksen and Eckart Marchand (eds), *Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010).

8 Malcolm Baker, 'The Reproductive Continuum: Plaster Casts, Plaster Mosaics and Photographs as Complementary Modes of Reproduction in the Nineteenth-Century Museum', in Rune Frederiksen and Eckart Marchand (eds), *Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present* (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 485.

9 Lending, *Plaster Monuments,* 8.

10 Christopher Pinney, *The Coming of Photography in India* (London: The British Library, 2008), 25.

11 Tapati Guha-Thakurta has written extensively about the copying of Sanchi in this period. I have benefitted from her insights in 'The Production and Reproduction of a Monument: The Many Lives if the Sanchi *Stupa*', *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 2 (2013): 77–109 and 'Conceits of the Copy: Travelling Replicas of the Past and Present', in Partha Chaterjee, Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Bodhisattva Kar (eds), *New Cultural Histories of India: Materialities and Practices* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 180–220.

12 For more on the shifts in approach of the British colonial archaeological administration in India, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Post-Colonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

13 Kavita Singh, 'Material Fantasy: The Museum in Colonial India', in Gayatri Sinha (ed.), *Art and Visual Culture in India 1857–2007* (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2009), 40–57 (p. 46). Tapati Guha-Thakurta notes that the Begums of Bhopal had been under constant pressure in the 1850s and 1860s from British archaeologists and also the French consul in India to 'gift' the Stupa's gateway to Queen Victoria or Emperor Napoleon III. Guha-Takhurta, 'Conceits of the Copy', 189.

14 It was signed by the princes, crown princes, dukes and archdukes of Great Britain and Ireland, Prussia, Hesse, Saxony, France, Belgium, Russia, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Austria, Denmark and Government of India. A facsimile of the Convention is reproduced in Brendan Cormier (ed.), *Copy Culture: Sharing in the Age of Digital Reproduction*, https://vanda-production-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/2018/06/15/11/42/57/e8582248-8878-486e-8a28-ebb8bf74ace8/Copy%20Culture.pdf (accessed 1 July 2020).

15 Report by H. H. Cole, Superintendent Archaeological Survey, N. W. P., India, to the Under-Secretary of State for India, India Office, London, 24 August 1869. Government of India, Home Department Proceeding, Archaeological Branch, 1869–70, 2–4.
16 Giovanni Ferdinando Franchi, *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851–1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 (http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib7_1206614685, accessed 4 January 2019).
17 See http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O136960/transporting-of-materials-from-jabbalpur-oil-painting-unknown/ (accessed 1 July 2020).
18 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, 3–4.
19 The Woodburytype and Autotype processes were used as they were considered to be much more permanent and stable than other reproductive techniques and therefore more suited to a publication project.
20 Dusan C. Stulik and Art Kaplan, *The Atlas of Analytical Signatures of Photographic Processes* (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2013), 4.
21 Maria Antonella Pelizarri, 'From Stone to Paper: Photographs of Architecture and the Traces of History', in Pelizarri (ed.), *Traces of India: Photography, Architecture, and the Politics of Representation, 1850–1900* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 35.
22 Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 10.
23 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi,* 5.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, 2.
27 Fergusson, quoted in Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 92. See also Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories*.
28 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, 5–6.
29 Ibid., 6.
30 Ibid.
31 Tim Barringer, 'The South Kensington Museum and the Colonial Project', in Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn (eds), *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 11–27.
32 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, 8.
33 Henry Hardy Cole, *Catalohue of the Objects of Indian Art Exhibited in the South Kensington Museum* (London: G.E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, 1874).
34 Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 5.
35 Cole, *The Architecture of Ancient Delhi*, 2.
36 *Memorandum of the Present Condition of the Amravati Tope in Madras*, Home Proceedings/Archaeology, June 1882, No. 9, Part A, NAI.
37 Guha-Thakurta, 'The Production and Reproduction of a Monument'.
38 For an online version of the book on the open-access archive.org site, see https://archive.org/details/architectureofan00cole (accessed 1 July 2020).
39 Stephen Bann, *Distinguished Images: Prints and the Visual Economy of Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013). I would like to thank Juliet Hacking for suggesting Stephen Bann's work in relation to my argument.

3

Modernizing the Victorian: Reading the Photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron 1886–1914

Joanne Lukitsh

On 1 January 1886, the *Photographic News*, a London weekly, published 'A Reminiscence of Mrs. Cameron by a Lady Amateur', which began, 'I suppose the great majority of modern photographers – at least the younger ones – remember very little of the pictures of the late Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron'.[1] The author's memories dated to 1866, when she first saw photographs by Cameron (1815–79) at an exhibition in London. The Lady Amateur blended observations on Cameron's exhibitions and reviews in the press with personal recollections of the photographer. The Lady Amateur's account of the difficulties of performing as 'Vivien' for Cameron's photographic illustrations for Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* is well known in the literature on the photographer, but other remarks in the reminiscence are historically significant. Declaring that Cameron 'was in fact, a Whistler in photography', pursuing photographic art for art's sake, the Lady Amateur concluded with the question of Cameron's legacy. She wondered whether Cameron's photographs, like those of her contemporary, Oscar Rejlander (1813–75), were difficult to access and view. If so, this was unfortunate, because Cameron's photographs 'drew attention to doing something in the way of portraiture, not quite so mechanical and microscopic in detail'.[2]

According to the Lady Amateur, Cameron's work had rapidly fallen into obscurity since her death in 1879. The credit for constructing Julia Margaret Cameron's posthumous fame as a photographer, one lauded for her portraits of important sitters and derided for her 'fancy subjects' and illustrations, has been given to the Bloomsbury group, in particular, to Cameron's great-niece, Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), who wrote about her great-aunt in the 1920s.[3] But the historical formation of Cameron's posthumous artistic reputation began decades earlier. The Lady Amateur's appreciation in 1886 for Cameron's 'peculiar softness' of detail in her portraits was an early instance of what soon became a widespread interpretation of Cameron's importance to contemporary photography. Beginning in 1889, with Peter Henry Emerson's (1856–1936) treatise, *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art*, photographers claimed Cameron as a precursor for their artistic work, staking their

views on readings of Cameron that supported their own versions of photographic aesthetics. As will be argued in this essay, their readings cumulatively served to reconceptualize Cameron's photographic practice less in terms of its socio-historical artistic meanings, and more in terms of its value to a self-consciously modern practice of artistic photography.

Two, larger, interconnected, issues emerge in this chronicle of the artistic claims made on Cameron's work. The first issue is the way photographers and critics in this period modernized her practice by emphasizing Cameron's distinctive use of lens focus over other aspects of her photography. The second is the use they made of reproductions of Cameron's photographs to convey their emphasis that focus was the key formal element of her imagery. Cameron's signature use of focus had been recognized in her time, and Emerson's arguments for correlating human vision with lens focus manipulation galvanized late-nineteenth-century debates on artistic photography. Cameron's manipulation of focus and depth of field to model the visual forms of her sitters was distinctly Victorian for the inspiration she took from the painters in her circle. It was precisely her experimentalism that allowed emerging modernist photographers to claim her work as a historical precursor, though this meant her artistic process was abstracted from its historical context.[4] This occurs discursively in criticism and commentary but also at a material level: commentators were often reading Cameron through works that were not the albumen prints of her making but versions in photographic and reproductive processes with distinctly different visual effects. As we shall see in this essay, by 1913–14 (over a decade before the Bloomsbury group deployed Cameron and her peers as the historical foils to their avowed cultural modernism), artistic photographers used photographic and photomechanical reproductions of Cameron's photographs to transform her images into a new kind of artistic object, one that could sustain a claim on the modern.

'I could not bear that all my ten years labour should be forgotten'

In 1875, anticipating the move of her household from Freshwater, on the Isle of Wight, to Sri Lanka (then British Ceylon), Cameron hired the Autotype Company of London to produce carbon photographic prints of her images.[5] She wrote a friend of the decision, 'I could not bear that all my ten years labour should be forgotten and "the grace of the fashion of it" perish and pass out of sight.'[6] Carbon photographs were chemically more stable than albumen photographs, which were subject to fading, yellowing and loss of tone in the highlights unless properly processed and stored.[7] The Autotype Company either used Cameron's wet collodion negatives to make their carbon photographs or, when her negative was damaged, photographed one of Cameron's albumen photographs and used this copy negative to make a carbon print. Cameron paid to have the Company do this work, anticipating making a profit from the sale of her prints in their London gallery.

Cameron's engagement with the Autotype Company also followed on from her ideas about the aesthetics of the albumen photographic print, whether issues of scale (in 1865 Cameron purchased a new lens to make the 'enormous photographs'

the Lady Amateur encountered) or tonal effects (in 1868, for example, Cameron offered purchasers of her albumen photographs the choice of either a grey or brown tonality).[8] Her decisions enhanced the status of her photographs as art commodities. The few carbon prints Cameron signed before her death show that she replicated grey and brown tonalities in carbon, and experimented with the rose and red tones made possible by the carbon process.[9] The Company produced about seventy Cameron images.[10] Few details are known of their arrangement, beyond Cameron's unhappiness with the Autotype Company's share of her profits, but the Company appears to have acted as her agent after she moved to Sri Lanka. In 1876 it contributed carbon prints of Cameron's photographs to an exhibition of the Photographic Society of London and in 1877 advertised Cameron's 'Remarkable Series of National Portraits, Studies of Beautiful Women, Historical and Poetical Pictures', with the other carbon photographic reproductions of historical paintings and prints, decorative art and historical objects on sale in their London gallery.[11]

Cameron had made it a feature of her practice that she never retouched her negatives, and yet in the Autotype Company's 1879 obituary for Cameron they reported correcting the 'imperfections' of her negatives.[12] It is difficult to make a general characterization of the Company's retouching from the relatively few extant Autotype prints which can be dated to this period: in some a subtle reinforcement of forms in the shadow is visible; in others there is extensive retouching to make details less blurry.[13] The Autotype Company continued to make Cameron prints at least until 1912, when they replied to an enquiry from Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946), the leading American artistic photographer and editor, about the Company's holdings of her photographs.[14] The later emphasis of artistic photographers on her focus elided Cameron's considerable interest in the aesthetics of her prints as an aspect of her creative practice, her reasons for turning to the Autotype Company to circulate her photographs and the Company's alteration of her negatives for their sale of carbon photographs of her work.

An 'amateur and imperfectly trained artist'

In the spring of 1889 two events brought Julia Margaret Cameron's images to the renewed attention of English artistic photographers and the art-viewing public. The photographer and theorist Peter Henry Emerson briefly discussed Cameron in his new book, *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art*, and her youngest son, Henry Herschel Hay Cameron (1852–1911), included his mother's photographs in a London exhibition promoting his commercial photographic studio. In *Naturalistic Photography*, Emerson argued that artistic photographers should use 'differential focusing', in approximation of human vision, to represent in their images their aesthetic response to nature.[15] The book was a product of Emerson's practice as a photographer and his research on scientific theories of human vision, lens optics and the history of naturalism in art.[16] Emerson singled out Oscar Rejlander, Antoine Samuel Adam-Solomon and Cameron as the 'only' photographers who had done work of 'any' artistic value since the invention of the medium, though none used lens focus as Emerson advocated for naturalistic photography. For Emerson, Cameron was 'the last and

the least' of the three, but he commended her for using an early version of the Rapid Rectilinear lens he advocated for naturalistic photographers and for not retouching her negatives.[17] Emerson's theories were a particular challenge to Henry Peach Robinson and artistic photographers who combined multiple negatives in a single image, and/or those who invented scenes for the camera.

Henry Cameron's exhibition featured photographs by his mother, his own commercial portraits and his carbon print reproductions of the works of the painter George Watts (1817–1904), a family friend and his mother's artistic collaborator and mentor. Watts also loaned paintings to the exhibition.[18] It is not known if the featured images by Julia Cameron were albumen photographs or Autotype Company carbon prints or possibly Henry's own carbon print copies of his mother's photographs. A short notice in the *Magazine of Art* described the exhibition as 'the most important of its kind that we have yet seen in London' because of how 'Mrs. Cameron and Mr. Cameron' used focus 'to mitigate the detail and lack of overall artistic effect, characteristic of photography'.[19]

While it is not certain that Emerson saw Henry Cameron's exhibition, Emerson certainly noticed the favourable reviews it earned in the press. In his October 1889 column for the *American Amateur Photographer* Emerson quoted the praise for Julia Cameron's photographs from the *Magazine of Art* and another favourable review. Emerson now wrote that Julia Cameron's portraits 'have never been approached and will always hold their own', though her photographs of 'angels with wings' were 'spurious work' that showed her as the 'amateur and imperfectly trained artist that she was'.[20] Emerson did not mention to his American readers that Watts's paintings – originals and carbon print reproductions – and Henry Cameron's photographs were also on display, as reported in the *Magazine of Art* notice. Given that Watts used allegorical figures in his paintings, Emerson's account foreclosed for his readers the connections between Cameron's 'angels' and Watts's iconography and artistic aims.

In 1890 Emerson published a monographic essay on Julia Cameron, with an annotated list of her 'principle works', in *Sun Artists*, an illustrated series on contemporary British artistic photography.[21] Emerson characterized Cameron as a worthy precursor for his ideas about artistic photography, except that, 'outside of portraiture, she was a failure'. In the essay he diminished – or outright dismissed – aspects of her artistic practice incompatible with his. Cameron's gender was crucial to Emerson's case, as he used stereotypes of femininity as juvenile and passive to characterize her photography. His position that Cameron was a kind of photographic primitive meant that the portraits he so admired became, effectively, demonstrations of the artistry of the photographic medium itself.

Setting out the idea that 'artistic photography is a new thing … just beginning to be apprehended', Emerson described Cameron as an exemplary member of an earlier generation of artistic photographers, a group which imitated the conventions of painters.[22] Emerson wrote of Cameron's distinguished background, and her friendships with contemporary painters, such as Watts, but characterized her as a photographer 'who was born, not made'. She was an 'idealist', who saw her models 'through the old masters' spectacles, fondly, lovingly, joyfully as a child. She was in no way original, but a follower of good conventions.'[23] Emerson's figure of Cameron peering through

spectacles was a foil to the naturalistic photographer, actively manipulating the camera lens to represent his visual experience of the scene.

Emerson made extensive use of Cameron's unfinished memoir of her photography, 'Annals of My Glass House' (published privately that year), to explain her process. He cited her statement that her early successes in photography had been a 'fluke' – an observation made by Henry Cameron, which his mother had quoted in the 'Annals' to characterize her early process of experimentation.[24] Emerson was curious enough about Cameron's focus to examine her first camera lens (provided by Henry) and conclude that it was impossible for Julia Cameron to have taken photographs at the 'definite focus' used by other photographers. This was a limitation of the lens of which Cameron – according to Emerson – was unaware. Emerson repeated his praise of her acquisition of a Rapid Rectilinear lens, but without reflecting on Cameron's reasons for seeking out this more technically advanced camera lens.[25] By providing an annotated list of Cameron's photographs, Emerson urged his readers to look at more photographs than the four photogravures illustrating his essay, but also wrote that many of the Julia Cameron photographs sold by her son suffered from 'retouching and working up', which implies these were Autotype prints.[26]

Emerson included in his list of Cameron's principal works *The Kiss of Peace* (Figure 3.1), illustrated in photogravure in the *Sun Artists* issue.[27] Compared to an albumen print of the same title (Figure 3.2), the photogravure transformed Cameron's subtle modelling of forms in light and dark and depiction of the tactile differences between the surfaces of skin and hair into the kind of 'overall artistic effect' which the *Magazine of Art* had praised in their notice. Emerson described *The Kiss of Peace* as a 'picture instinct with delicate observation, sweetness, and refinement', a comment which distinctly minimized the sensuality of the women's kiss and erotic profusion of their unbound hair. Nor did Emerson mention the Christian connotations of Cameron's title.[28] Though clearly not an example of Cameron's 'portraiture', Emerson's praise of this and another Cameron photograph, *The Dream*, reproduced in the *Sun Artists* issue, indicates that he used 'portraiture' broadly to refer to photographs he could read as transparent to their subjects. While the women's unbound hair was a trope of Pre-Raphaelite painting, unlike the angel wings that so troubled Emerson in other Cameron photographs, the beauty of the women's hair was recorded, not invented, by the camera. Emerson's belief in the transparency of the photograph to its subject persisted even after he famously repudiated his theory of naturalistic photography in early 1891.

An article Emerson published later in 1891 is evidence of his continued difficulty in crediting Cameron with artistic agency. Now willing to consider 'purely imaginative decorative work' in photography, Emerson published 'The Artistic Aspects of Figure Photography' in the *Magazine of Art*.[29] He no longer thought photography could be an art, but it could be a product of good taste, an activity he feminized by illustrating the article with half-tone reproductions of photographs by Cameron and by Eveleen Tennant Myers (1856–1937), a contemporary amateur photographer.[30] Emerson now judged success in Cameron's figure photographs on a new criterion: a figure photograph was unsuccessful if he could detect 'subtle evidence of self-consciousness'

Figure 3.1 Julia Margaret Cameron, *The Kiss of Peace*, 1869 (negative), 1890 (photogravure). Photogravure from *Sun Artists*, no. 5, 1890, Image: 12.9 × 17.1 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago; restricted gift of Lucia Woods, 1976.175. Reproduced with permission of The Art Institute of Chicago/Art Resource, NY.

Figure 3.2 Julia Margaret Cameron, *The Kiss of Peace,* 1869, albumen silver print. 35.1 × 28.2 cm. Royal Photographic Society Collection/Victoria and Albert Museum, London RPS.826-2017, The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the V&A, acquired with the generous assistance of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund.

in the performance of the models in the photograph.[31] Emerson was still reading the imaginative photograph as a record, against which he could now evaluate the artifice of the model's performance. In this way, Emerson characterized Julia Cameron's practice for a generation of artistic photographers that – according to the Lady Amateur – had forgotten Cameron.

From Victorian to Modern

In 1904 a London exhibition of Cameron's work situated the photographer firmly in a now historical Victorian moment. Nearly all of the photographs displayed in a gallery of the Serendipity Bookshop were albumen prints, many loaned by people in Cameron's circle or their children. These albumen photographs were artefacts of a social network. The author of the catalogue essay was Alice Meynell (1847–1922), a prominent journalist, poet and author of books on Victorian writers.[32] Meynell evaluated Cameron's focus as her invention ('instead of turning the hard eye of the camera fall full upon her subject, Mrs. Cameron let it see sidelong and, as it were, by chance'). According to Meynell, Cameron produced visual effects which were popular

with the public ('for the public rightly enough likes softness in the arts of black and white') while appealing to the artist (Cameron had an 'almost Venetian feeling in composition, and a sense of form which she strangely enough succeeded in expressing through a medium so separate from the manipulator's own will as photography').[33] Cameron's use of her lens was one element of her art, but for Meynell light was Cameron's principal artistic means, as was 'expressive shadowing', her selection of sitters 'of beauty different from the common ideal' and her 'art of calming and ennobling their actions and attitudes' when photographing them. Meynell's text informed the realism of the camera with Cameron's cultural and social values – 'the greatness of her sitters made Mrs. Cameron's work historical, and its singular beauty gives it a distinct place among the arts'.[34] The connections Meynell drew between Cameron's photographs and the colour and modelling of form characteristic of Venetian painting, as well as 'the arts of black and white', sensitively placed Cameron's photographs in a – now historical – visual culture of aesthetic effects appreciated by artists and an art-going public.

When Frederick H. Evans (1853–1943), the prominent artistic photographer and writer on photography, reviewed the Serendipity Gallery exhibition for the *Amateur Photographer*, he set out the terms of the emerging modernist perception of Cameron's photography.[35] Unlike Meynell, Evans positioned Cameron in relation to contemporary photography, as he sought to account for her production of these 'really astonishing portrait studies'. Though 'the technics, the practice, the methods of photography have so astonishingly advanced, been added to, been simplified, and made more certain as to results' since Cameron's time, this is not shown in much contemporary artistic photography. Evans stated that his 'chief regret' in studying these works is that Cameron did not have modern plates, lenses and platinum paper, so that her 'visions might have been recorded without those disturbing and vexatious technical effects' that mar her work and faded her prints.[36] Evans's emphasis on the importance of 'vision' to photography meant he conceived of Cameron's art as transcending her moment, as the excellence of her work – despite the wet collodion negative process – attests to the importance of 'the seeing eye … [,] the creative, eliciting, inducing vision' for photography. Evans saw Cameron's vision as specific to photography: the artistic power of her work was proof that technology could convey the vision of the photographer.

Some of Evans's observations resonate with Meynell's, such as his appreciation of Cameron's abilities to pose sitters for long exposures and 'elicit from them a quiet serenity … free from boredom or restiveness under the camera's gaze'. Over a decade after Emerson's *Sun Artists* essay, Cameron's gender was still significant to her artistic identity, as Evans compared Cameron to Gertrude Käsebier (1852–1934), the contemporary American photographer, though Evans noted that Käsebier had to make a living from her commercial portrait studio. Unlike Emerson, Evans appreciated Cameron's 'group attempts' which, though they 'may now savour of the ludicrous', he believed would still appeal to the student for their 'earnestness and suggestion'. Not only had 'figure photography' – such as Käsebier's – become more accepted among artistic photographers, Evans's terms also imply a Victorian art now more distant from the present.

Evans's appreciative reading of Cameron as a precursor of modernist photographic vision became more decisive in a historical narrative of progress in artistic photography by R. Child Bayley (1869–?), an English photography editor and writer. Bayley, in his discussion of 'Pictorial Photography' in the 1907 book *The Complete Photographer*, placed Cameron in relation to her mid-Victorian peers, Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson (1830–1901), but believed the quality of Cameron's portraits was 'characterized by a breadth and force seen in that of no one else since the time of Hill, and it is only by one or two modern workers, of whom Steichen may be noted in particular, that this succession is maintained'.[37] Thus, Bayley described a narrative of continuity and succession for the artistic achievements of photography, situating Cameron between David Octavius Hill (1802–70), the Scottish painter who turned to the calotype process for a period in the 1840s, and Edward Steichen (1879–1973), the accomplished contemporary American photographer. Alfred Stieglitz, editor of *Camera Work*, the journal of artistic photography, excerpted Bayley's book in 1907.[38] Stieglitz had named Hill the 'father of artistic photography' in *Camera Work* in 1903, but Bayley's text was the first mention of Cameron in the journal.[39] By 1910 Stieglitz's editorial direction of *Camera Work* was shifting from artistic photography to developments in modern painting and other media, though he continued to publish on contemporary photography and on historical photography by Hill. This approach would inform a new, startling modernist reading of Cameron, one effected by images rather than words, in *Camera Work*.

When Stieglitz contacted the Autotype Company in the fall of 1912 to enquire about having photogravure plates made from Cameron's negatives, the Company replied with a list of the twelve negatives – all portraits, except one – remaining in their collection from the nearly seventy subjects from Cameron's day.[40] In his editor's notes to the January 1913 issue of *Camera Work*, Stieglitz described the five Cameron photogravures reproduced in the issue as made 'directly from the original collodion negatives which average about ten by twelve inches in size'.[41] Three of the Cameron photographs he reproduced were from 12 × 15" negatives, notably larger than the size of a page in *Camera Work*. Stieglitz's account of the close correlation between Autotype Company negative and photogravure plate served a rhetorical purpose: these *Camera Work* photogravures were faithful representations of her images.[42]

Stieglitz reproduced two portraits of Carlyle on successive pages. Since the Autotype Company listed only one portrait of Carlyle, Stieglitz must have obtained the other portrait from elsewhere. The visual relationship between the two Carlyle portraits must have been important to Stieglitz. Each photogravure in *Camera Work* was covered by a tissue overleaf, so the pairing of images (Figures 3.3 and 3.4) appeared in the issue as a sequence of overleaf, image, overleaf and image turned one after the other. By presenting the two photogravures of the portraits of Carlyle in succession, Stieglitz encouraged a reader to compare the two images. Each portrait represented a different aspect of Carlyle's head, and the closeness in size between the head in each image encouraged a viewer's attention to changes in light, shadow and shapes between the two portraits. In the first photogravure (Figure 3.3) the long range of middle tones depicting Carlyle's hair and face makes his head appear spatially flat, in contrast to the modelling of the forms of his nose and beard. The second photogravure's reproduction

Figure 3.3 Julia Margaret Cameron, 'Thomas Carlyle' [profile], 1867 (negative); 1913 (photogravure). From *Camera Work, A Photographic Quarterly* 41 (January 1913). Image: 8 ½ × 6 ¼ in (21.6 × 15.9 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, from the Dorothy Norman Collection 1997-146-125.

Figure 3.4 Julia Margaret Cameron, 'Thomas Carlyle' [full face], 1867 (negative); 1913 (photogravure). From *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly* 41 (January 1913). Image: 7 ¹³⁄₁₆ × 6 ⅛ in (19.8 × 15.6 cm). Philadelphia Museum of Art, from the Dorothy Norman Collection 1967-285-263.

(Figure 3.4) of Cameron's use of depth of field to model Carlyle's head against his shoulders means that tonal variations between hair and forehead, beard and mouth, convey a similar play of pictorial flatness and modelled shapes. In *Camera Work* the previous year, 1912, Stieglitz sequenced two halftone photographs of a Picasso bust: in profile and from the front, as if a mugshot of the sculpture (Figures 3.5 and 3.6).[43] The Picasso bust is posed on a surface, illuminated against a darker background, and each image is titled *Picasso: Sculpture*. For the most part, Stieglitz used middle tones, rather than strong contrasts of dark and light, to depict Picasso's modelling of angled and curved forms. Stieglitz's photogravures of Cameron's *Carlyle* photographs, and their sequencing in the issue of *Camera Work*, emphasized seeing Cameron's photographs through the lens of modern art, a tension between pictorial surface and space.

Just a year later, in October 1914, the prominent American artistic photographer Alvin Langdon Coburn conceived of the modern in artistic photography differently from Stieglitz. During this moment of uncertainty and fear and impending war, Coburn organized an exhibition, *The Old Masters of Photography*, of the works of Cameron, Hill, Lewis Carroll and Thomas Keith.[44] Coburn's exhibition consisted entirely of photographic reproductions of the works of these photographers, an activity

Figure 3.5 After Pablo Ruiz y Picasso, 'Head of a Woman' [Fernande Olivier,1909 – full face], 1912, halftone. From *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly*, special number (August 1912), 19.5 × 15.1 cm (page), © 2019 Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York). Reproduced with the permission of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Figure 3.6 After Pablo Ruiz y Picasso, 'Head of a Woman' [Fernande Olivier, 1909 – profile] 1912, halftone. From *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly,* special number (August 1912), 19.5 × 15.1 cm (page), © 2019 Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Reproduced with the permission of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

that enacted the tensions between the modern and the traditional embedded in the exhibition's title. In an essay he published on the exhibition in *Century Magazine*, Coburn provided short biographies of each photographer, writing how, in light of 'these ominous days', he considered the role of the artist photographer as a person who 'stores up the contemporary truth of beauty for posterity'. This was a role for photography in the present, because – despite the title he chose for the exhibition – Coburn considered the four photographers more 'modern' than the average professional photographer of the day.[45]

Coburn produced the twenty Cameron photographs in the *Old Masters of Photography* by making a copy negative from a print and printing this negative on platinum paper.[46] The Cameron titles Coburn printed included her portraits, fancy subjects and illustrations. Less than a decade earlier, Frederick Evans had imagined Cameron using modern photographic materials to achieve her vision more perfectly. Coburn turned to platinum reproductions to produce Cameron photographs that were permanent and therefore adequate to the role Coburn envisioned of the artist photographer. He directly acknowledged the fragility of the printing processes which Cameron and the others had used, writing that he made the platinum copy

prints because 'most of the old prints are old and faded' and – though none of the photographers had used platinum – Coburn could convey the 'spirit' of their works using this paper. In this exhibition, the platinum copy prints of Cameron's photographs could convey the symbolic significance of photographic permanence. Coburn represented Cameron and other nineteenth-century photographers as artists, modern for their use of photography, but capable of being folded into a tradition of artistic accomplishment in a time of social crisis.

This essay's chronicle has paid critical attention to the active historical role played by what are conventionally termed 'photographic reproductions'. Julia Margaret Cameron's production of albumen and carbon prints of her photographs demonstrated her attention to the aesthetics of the photographic print as a component of her art, as well as her recognition of the material fragility of the processes she used. Cameron made aesthetic use of the camera lens and light to produce subtle distinctions between textured detail and suggestive contours in her photographs. These visual effects were lost in reproductions which flattened forms in pictorial space and reduced her expressive use of contrast to generalized tones. In the recurring preference for producing reproductions of Cameron's portraits, rather than her 'angels with wings', artistic photographers narrowed the criteria of value to one based on authenticity because, unlike Cameron's composition photographs, her portraits could be reliably located in a moment of time. These modernist transformations of Cameron's photographs at the hands of self-conscious artistic photographers, most notably the extraordinary presentation of her two images of *Carlyle* enacted in *Camera Work*, supplanted much of her own creativity and its place within her Victorian historical moment, for a new narrative of photographic progress and temporality.

Earlier versions of this essay were given at 'Rethinking Early Photography' at the University of Lincoln, UK, in 2015 and 'Rethinking "Pictorialism": American Art and Photography from 1895 to 1925' at Princeton University, USA in 2017.

Notes

1 [Agnes Chapman, née Mangles], 'A Reminiscence of Mrs. Cameron by a Lady Amateur', *Photographic News* 30, no. 1426 (1 January 1886): 2–4. Agnes Mangles Chapman (c. 1850–1906) was the model for 'Vivien', Julian Cox and Colin Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron: The Complete Photographs* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum in association with The National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford, England, 2003), 517, catalogue numbers 1163–4.

2 'A Reminiscence of Mrs. Cameron', 3–4.

3 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Victorian Photographs of Famous Men and Fair Women*, with introductions by Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry (London, L & V. Woolf, 1926).

4 Joanne Lukitsh, '"Like a Lionardo": Exchanges between Julia Margaret Cameron and the Rossetti Brothers', in *The Pre-Raphaelite Lens: British Photography and Painting, 1848–1875* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art and Lund Humphries, 2010), 134–45.

5 Helmut Gernsheim, *Julia Margaret Cameron: Her Life and Photographic Work*, 2nd ed. (Millerton, NY: Aperture, 1975), 53–4.

6 Julia Margaret Cameron to Blanche Cornish, undated letter, quoted in Gernsheim, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 53–4.
7 James M. Reilly, 'The History, Technique and Structure of Albumen Prints', *American Institute for Conservation Preprints*, May 1980, 93–8, http://albumen.conservation-us.org/library/c20/reilly1980.html, accessed 7 July 2019.
8 Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 2, figure 2.
9 RPS 1036–2017, RPS 909–2017, RPS 1282–2017, The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.
10 'Appendix B: Inscriptions, Stamps, and the Business of Photography', in Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron,* 500–1. This text states that all of the Autotype Company's prints were made from Cameron's negatives, but this is not the case: see RPS 1036–2017, The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Cameron wrote of sending a print from a damaged negative for the Company to copy, Gernsheim, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 53.
11 'No. 147, Studies by Mrs. Cameron, printed in Autotype from Negatives from Paper Positives (the original Negatives having been destroyed)', Twenty-First Annual Exhibition of the Photographic Society of Great Britain, 1876, http://erps.dmu.ac.uk/exhibit_details.php?etid=141812, accessed 10 February 2019. 'Autotype', *The Academy: Weekly Review of Literature, Science and Art* 12, no. 270 (7 July 1877): i.
12 Colin Ford, *The Cameron Collection: An Album of Photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron Presented to Sir John Herschel* (Wokingham: Van Nostrand Reinhold in association with the National Portrait Gallery, London, 1975), 22; Julian Cox, 'To Startle the Eye with Wonder and Delight', in Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 53.
13 See RPS 1118–2017, The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.
14 Autotype Company to Alfred Stieglitz, 12 September 1912, YCAL MSS 85 box 3, folder 67, Alfred Stieglitz/Georgia O'Keeffe Archive. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
15 P. H. Emerson, *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art* (London: Sampson Lowe, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1889), 148–52.
16 John Taylor, *The Old Order and The New: P. H. Emerson and Photography, 1885–1895* (Munich: Prestel, 2007), 29–39; Carl Fuldner, 'Emerson's Evolution', *Tate Papers* 27, Spring 2017, https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/27/emersons-evolution, accessed 23 August 2019.
17 Emerson, *Naturalistic Photography*, 137, 187–9.
18 'Exhibitions of the Month', *Magazine of Art* 12 (June 1889): xxxiv–xxxv.
19 Ibid.
20 P. E. Emerson, 'English Letter', *American Amateur Photographer* 1 (September 1889): 121–3.
21 P. H. Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', *Sun Artists* 5 (October 1890): 33–42. Michelle Foa, 'Textual Inhibitions: Photographic Criticism in Late Victorian Britain', *History of Photography* 36, no. 1 (2012): 33–43.
22 Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', 33.
23 Ibid., 40.
24 Emerson cited the 'Annals' as 'A fragment published privately', Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', 35. Excerpts from the 'Annals' were published in a catalogue to Henry's 1889 exhibition, 'Notes', *The Photographic News*, Vol. 33 No. 1600 (3 May 1889), 296.

25 Emerson wrote that the '"Jamine" [lens] working at F/6 had no small diaphragm' and this lens's 'positive chromatic aberration' meant that the image on the ground glass appeared sharp, but the negative 'would be out of focus when taken'. Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', 36–7. Gernsheim examined the lens and arrived at a more balanced evaluation of its capacities; Gernsheim, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 69–70. Her first camera, with the Jamine lens, was a gift from her daughter and son-in-law. Cameron must have purchased the Rapid Rectilinear lens by August 1865, as examples of her work with this new, larger lens date to that month: see Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron* (Getty catalogue number 157).

26 Emerson reported that Colnaghi's, Cameron's print seller from 1864, no longer sold her prints; Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', 41.

27 The editor, W. Arthur Boord, wrote that Henry Cameron provided the photographs reproduced as photo-engravings in the issue, *Sun Artists*, 33. The publication's editor explained in his notes that the printer had enlarged the usual size of their photogravure plate to minimize a loss of quality from the reduction in size of Cameron's photographs, but did not indicate that the plates were made from carbon or albumen prints. Emerson had considerable experience in the reproduction of his photographs in photogravure, but it is not clear that he was involved with the production of the *Sun Artist* gravures. The four Cameron photographs reproduced in the issue are catalogued in Cox and Ford*, Julia Margaret Cameron*: *Sir John Herschel* (Getty catalogue number 675); *Alfred Tennyson* (Getty catalogue number 807); *The Dream* (Getty catalogue number 258); *The Kiss of Peace* (Getty catalogue number 1129).

28 Emerson, 'Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron', 41.

29 Emerson, 'The Artistic Aspects of Figure Photography', *Magazine of Art* 14 (August 1891): 310.

30 Myers was inspired to work in photography because of a meeting with Cameron. See 'Eveleen Myers', *Sun Artists* 7 (1891). Myers became a prominent portrait photographer, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp07354/eveleen-myers-nee-tennant (accessed 1 July 2020).

31 Emerson, 'The Artistic Aspects of Figure Photography', 315–16.

32 'Exhibition of Photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron with a Note by Mrs. Meynell', The Serendipity Gallery, 118 Westbourne Grove, W. [1904]; June Badeni, *The Slender Tree: A Life of Alice Meynell* (Padstow, Cornwall: Tabb House, 1982). Meynell's son, Everett, owned the Serendipity Bookstore.

33 Meynell, 'Exhibition of Photographs', 3–5.

34 Ibid., 6.

35 Frederic H. Evans, 'Exhibition of Photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron', *The Amateur Photographer* 40 (21 July 1904): 43–4.

36 Platinum photographic printing paper was more chemically stable than albumen paper. Evans refers to the paper as 'our good CC platinotype paper', using the commercial name for a platinum paper with a rough texture. Rachel Danzing, 'Alfred Stieglitz: Photographic Processes and Related Conservation Issues', *Topics in Photographic Preservation* 4 (1991): 57–79.

37 R. Child Bayley, 'Pictorial Photography', in *The Complete Photographer*, 2nd ed. (New York: McClure, Phillips & Co, 1907), 356–7.

38 'Pictorial Photography', *Camera Work* (1907) Number 18, 23.

39 'Pictorial Synopsis of Numbers Already Issued', *Camera Work* (1905) Number 12. The issue is unpaginated.

40 Op. cit. Autotype Company to Alfred Stieglitz, 12 September 1912.

41 'Our Plates', *Camera Wor*k (1913) Number 41, 42. Bayley's discussion of Cameron from *The Complete Photographer* was excerpted here.

42 The *Camera Work* Cameron images are: *I. Carlyle* (Getty catalogue number 629); *II. Carlyle* (Getty catalogue number 627); *III. Herschel* (Getty catalogue number 676); *IV. Joachim* (Getty catalogue number 695); *V. Ellen Terry at the age of sixteen* (Getty catalogue number 497). Stieglitz's selection from the Autotype Company list connected Cameron's portraits with early twentieth-century life: Ellen Terry, seventeen years old when Cameron photographed her in 1864, was planning an international tour of her performances of Shakespeare's heroines in 1913; the violinist Joseph Joachim lived until 1907 and had recorded his work on the gramophone in 1903. While Sir John Herschel had died in 1871, the portrait of the preeminent scientist served here as an emblem of his contributions to the invention of photography.

43 *Camera Work* (Special Number, August 1912). Stieglitz is identified as the photographer of the two halftone photographs on the 48th page of the issue.

44 The exhibition opened at the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain in London and toured to New York City and Buffalo in 1915. Pamela Glasson Roberts, *Alvin Langdon Coburn* (Madrid: Fundación Mapfre, 2014); The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy Albright Art Gallery, *Catalogue of an Exhibition of the Old Masters of Photography*, 20 January–28 February 1915.

45 Alvin Langdon Coburn, 'The Old Masters of Photography', *Century Magazine* 90 (October 1915), 909–20.

46 Coburn made the platinum prints of Cameron and Carroll's photographs from copy negatives, and made the prints of Annan and Hill's from their paper negatives. Alvin Langdon Coburn, 'Preface', *Catalogue of an Exhibition of the Old Masters of Photography*, 3.

4

The Photographic and the Picturesque: The Aesthetic and Chemical Foundations of Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard's Activities

Herta Wolf

The Photographic: Predispositions

Photographic practices and the evolution of photographic techniques surely cannot be explained by a purely biographical, let alone a psychological approach. Still, I would like to preface my observations with a few facts about Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard's career that informed his works, or rather his working methods. Born in Lille in 1802, he is conventionally remembered as the owner of the Imprimerie photographique, which he established on the art enthusiast Hippolyte Fockedey's premises in Loos-lez-Lille southwest of Lille in 1851.[1] Yet as we will see, even this choice of site was not merely a result of the fortunate circumstance that he had found a partner and friend in Fockedey, who agreed to oversee their joint photographic operation at his 'charming residence', as Blanquart-Évrard would recall in *La Photographie: Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations*, the outline of the medium's history and future he published in 1869.[2]

To safeguard the integrity of his scientific reputation, Blanquart-Évrard saw himself compelled to set up a photographic printing shop that was to demonstrate in practice the truth of what the photographic critic Francis Wey had alleged was merely a theoretical proposition:[3] that it was possible to make affordable prints from photographic negatives, better in quality than those produced by the renowned photographers in Paris, regardless of weather conditions, and in large numbers – in short, that an industrial-scale photographic printing establishment was viable.[4] For such a business to prosper, Blanquart-Évrard argued, it needed the sort of guaranteed sales potential that allowed for continuous operation. Moreover, it would have 'obligations to meet and bills to pay': 'a publisher who must satisfy his subscribers week after week, month after month, cannot afford delays except in extraordinary circumstances', as he explained in a letter to the Société héliographique that was published in the 13 April 1851 issue of the society's journal, *La Lumière*.[5]

These remarks on the establishment of a photographic printing shop attest to Blanquart-Évrard's entrepreneurial acumen, but the conventional account in which he

figures primarily as a photographic entrepreneur does not do him justice. The French photography critics associated with *La Lumière* and the reservations concerning the commercialization of photography voiced by the members of the Société héliographique may have contributed to this misconception.[6] Since the mid-twentieth century, scholars of the history of photography have portrayed him as a photographic industrialist,[7] a label that is at odds with the significance that mid-nineteenth-century observers accorded him as an eminent researcher on paper photographic processes.[8] To show why his contributions cannot be reduced to his publishing activities and why it is historically incorrect to suggest that he helped pave the way for the transformation of photography into a mass medium,[9] I will sketch the origins of his 'historic pieces', as he called his early sample or model photographs of 1846 and 1847 when he looked back on his activities in 1869.[10] A closer examination of his career will allow us to grasp his important role in the development of paper photography and better understand the subjects of both his own photographs and the works of others, which he distributed in albums.

Blanquart-Évrard as photochemical experimenter

Blanquart-Évrard first came to public notice with a letter dated 23 September 1846 and addressed to one of the two permanent secretaries of the Academy of Sciences, François Arago (1786–1853). It was due to the latter's crucial role in publishing and communicating photography at its beginnings, especially for Daguerre's photographic process, that made him so interesting for the *Lillois*.[11] After a brief introduction in which he notes that it was Arago's efforts in support of the pioneers of photography that encouraged him to write, he enters into a discussion of the *épreuves* – the word must be taken to denote work samples and, hence, evidence of the potential of his paper process[12] – he encloses (Figures 4.1 and 4.2): two portraits 'captured with the same technical equipment and in the same lighting conditions', which he offers as demonstration of his assertion that photographic prints on paper 'may be varied as desired by the operator', who can choose to produce faint or high-contrast copies.[13]

His explanatory remarks soon reveal that the two prints – (self-)portraits taken in two consecutive exposures, with the sitter striking virtually identical poses – are not so much an adjunct to the letter to Arago as rather its true occasion: example pictures that legitimize the unsolicited submission. This interpretation is confirmed by the writer's request to Arago to add his name to the roster of those who have contributed to the development and refinement of photographic processes. Should the secretary recognize his merits, Blanquart-Évrard writes, he promises to send additional and larger specimens. Arago acceded to this desire for publicity by including a summary of the communication in the report of the 28 September 1846 meeting in the *Comptes rendus hebdomadaires des séances de l'Académie des sciences*. The readership is informed that a Monsieur Blanquart-Évrard of Lille has 'submitted two specimens of paper photography that – although they depict the same scene and were taken under the same conditions – show widely different tonal values. Their author informs us that these differences are entirely at the operator's discretion'.[14]

Figure 4.1 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, Self-portrait of the author in his studio, low-contrast salted paper print toned in sodium hyposulphite from a paper negative with protective coating; first of two sample pictures enclosed with letter to François Arago dated 23 September 1846; mounted on tissue paper, 9.2 × 27.5 cm (photograph: 8.4 × 11 cm), Archives de l'Académie des sciences, Paris.

Figure 4.2 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, Self-portrait of the author in his studio, high-contrast salted paper print toned in sodium hyposulphite from a paper negative with protective coating; second of two sample pictures enclosed with letter to François Arago dated 23 September 1846; mounted on tissue paper, 9.5 × 27.5 cm (photograph: 8.4 × 10.8 cm), Archives de l' Académie des sciences, Paris.

The letter and the sample pictures sent along with it indicate that their author is an artist and art lover, but nevertheless show him surrounded by collector's items. They include teapots, glasses, lengths of fabric, two casts of faces showing Blanquart-Évrard himself and the study materials of a sculptor: at the top right of the picture, one sees a realistically modelled leg, whose muscles and veins can be recognized in the paper photograph, and a hand extended to include the lower arm. All the objects show what could be seen in many early daguerreotypes (see, for example, Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, *Intérieur d'un cabinet de curiosité*, 1837; or Charles Fortier, *Nature morte*, 1839, Paris; or also some of the paper positives by Hippolyte Bayard): views into the studio of an artist or collector. Unlike in the photos mentioned, the person portrayed is given more space: framed on the left side by a draped, chequered length of fabric, and leaning on a lectern draped with chequered fabric as well, the person portrayed looks viewers directly in the eye. When Blanquart-Évrard photographs what is shown in the first daguerreotypes, he thus also calls attention to the picture quality of his paper process, which is able to reproduce equally detailed views. Thus, this letter to Arago – by disclosing that he is an art lover – offers a self-portrayal in tune with his claim that his process affords the photographer new creative freedoms.

Meanwhile, there are other crucial biographical facts that he kept to himself, facts that are no less central to an attempt to understand the specifics of his photographic practices. They help to explain how a cloth merchant and dilettante[15] from northern France was able to undertake experimental studies in photographic techniques and develop processes that, as he notes in his letter from the autumn of 1846, are not 'true discoveries' so much as well-researched 'applications' of 'foundations' – foundations laid, we may add, by others.[16] Yet while he would pay tribute to the originator of what he called the 'foundations' of paper photography – that is, William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–77) – in his later treatises on processes, including the 1851 monograph on paper photography,[17] or in his historical studies such as the abovementioned publication *La photographie, ses origines et ses progrès* of 1869, Blanquart-Évrard's published writings make no reference to the fact that his enthusiasm for photographic experimentation was informed by the kind of knowledge that circulated in contemporary chemistry laboratories. That this knowledge laid the groundwork for his improvements to paper photography was only revealed in print after his death in 1872, when Benjamin Corenwinder and Alphonse Davanne discussed it in their obituaries.[18]

Educated at private schools, Blanquart worked in the tobacco industry before marrying into a family of rich cloth merchants in 1831 and joining his father-in-law's business. Only then did he add Virginie Évrard's last name to his own. Already in 1826, he attended Frédéric Kuhlmann's lectures on chemistry, which were very popular amongst industrialists and young scientists, drawing audiences of up to 300.[19] Kuhlmann (1803–81) had established a chemical plant in Loos-lez-Lille the year after he was appointed to the newly created Municipal Chair in Chemistry in Lille, and as he liked to surround himself with students who were eager to learn, Blanquart, his senior by less than a year, joined him as an assistant and amanuensis in his laboratory. It was here that the latter laid the groundwork of his knowledge of chemistry, which, according to Corenwinder, 'was the science that proved essential to the discoveries and improvements that he would contribute to the art of photography'.[20] Alphonse Davanne

(1824–1912), a chemist and author of handbooks on photography and its processes, similarly mentions Kuhlmann's role, observing that it was 'in the laboratory of this outstanding scientist that [Blanquart-Évrard] learned the basics of chemistry, which are of such great use to anyone wishing to make serious study of the photographic processes'. Not just an apprentice, he adds, Blanquart-Évrard was a chemist in his own right, 'a chemist and an artist who, once he was seduced by photography, succumbed to its charm and devoted his entire career to it'.[21]

Having granted Blanquart-Évrard's wish and reported his submission on 28 September 1846, Arago soon received the promised additional samples from the photographer's 'research into replacing the silver plates [daguerreotypes] with paper'.[22] At the 7 December meeting of the Académie des sciences, he was able to present, 'in Blanquart-Évrard's name', a 'series of fine photographic pictures on paper'. Arago continued, 'Like the photographs presented on an earlier occasion, they show several reproductions of the same drawing [photographic image], but with different tonal and light values that can be obtained as desired.'[23] (In fact, the earlier pictures had been prints from two different, though very similar, negatives (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2).) This mode of demonstrating the potential of his process was presumably also that on which the 'amateur painter and director of a prosperous mercantile company in Lille'[24] relied when submitting material for inclusion in the 1851 Great Exhibition.[25] Even though it is not known what subjects Blanquart-Évrard exhibited at the Great Exhibition, it can be assumed that he presented reproductions of contemporary artworks to the Académie des sciences in December 1846. In both cases, the presentation modalities remain the same: one and the same motif is printed again and again with different contrasts, one time too faint (thus seemingly overexposed), then with balanced tonal values and sometimes also with a very high-contrast positive version of the negative.[26]

Photographic portraits

As described, Blanquart-Évrard did not confine his attempts to publicize his photochemical refinements to the field of science. He also sent a proxy, the physician and deputy of the Département du Nord, Gaspard Thémistocle Lestiboudois (1797–1876), to the Académie des beaux-arts to present a series of sample pictures he had taken himself and request an expert appraisal.[27] The submission, labelled an 'album' by the Academy, was scrutinized by a special committee convened for the purpose; unable to agree on an assessment, the members consulted with two colleagues from the Académie des sciences, Jean-Baptiste Biot (1774–1862) and Victor Regnault (1810–78).[28] The experts thought that they needed to witness the technique with their own eyes in order to come to an accurate verdict concerning its innovative potential and quality, and so Blanquart-Évrard was summoned to Paris for a demonstration and examination of his process, which took place outside Victor Regnault's physical laboratory in the interior courtyard of the Institut de France for three days in April 1847.[29]

The results of this presentation and the committee's conclusions, although signed by the Secretary of the Académie des beaux-arts, (Désiré) Raoul Rochette (1789–1854),

were summarized by the history painter François Édouard Picot. In his memorandum, Picot notes that Blanquart-Évrard's technique was superior to all processes that had been tried before in terms of the precision and clarity of the pictures it yielded; it was moreover easy to handle and produced no spoilage, making it economical as well. 'As evidence of these [Blanquart-Évrard's] findings, the photographs [*épreuves*] recorded during the experiments conducted in the presence of the committee were presented to the Académie des beaux-arts for assessment of their merits. The Académie concurs with the conclusions of the report and instructs its permanent secretary',[30] Raoul Rochette, to inform the Minister of the Interior of the utility of Blanquart-Évrard's process, underscoring, in particular, that the photo-chemist and photographer from Lille had shared the secrets of his operations without pursuing any kind of personal gain. During a meeting of the Société libre des beaux-arts on 20 April of the same year, the sculptor Louis-Victor Bougron read out the results of a second appraisal by a three-member committee, based, in this instance, solely on an examination of photographs.[31]

Picot's memorandum is of interest because, by shedding light on at least some of the reasons behind Blanquart-Évrard's publicity efforts, it can help us understand the iconography of his sample or demonstration pictures. His argument itself is modelled on the historiography of photography that emerged with Arago's promotion of Daguerre's process in the first half of 1839 – using a silver-plated copper plaque to create a unique image – the rights of which were purchased by the French government (i.e. Ministry of the Interior) as announced in the meeting of the Académie des sciences on 19 August 1839.[32] Following Arago, Picot prefaces his report by noting that the very earliest experiments with photography on paper predated even Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's (1765–1833) and Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre's (1797–1851) work, sketching a long history of paper photography that, in his telling, began with Thomas Wedgwood (1771–1805) and Humphry Davy (1778–1829) in England and the physicist Jacques Charles (1746–1823) in France.[33] He also mentions the research into photosensitive materials and possible ways to desensitize them after exposure that William Henry Fox Talbot undertook starting in 1834. The latter's turn on the stage implicitly marks the crucial point that prompted Blanquart-Évrard's efforts to develop a reliable reproductive process as well as the debates among the members of the Académie des beaux-arts:

> We [i.e. the members of the committee] have had opportunities to consider a large number of fine photographic pictures of buildings and works of art by Mr Talbot. These prints are superb thanks to their outstanding image definition. The same photographer's portraits, however, are not nearly as perfect, and much inferior to those submitted by Mr Blanquart-Évrard and now under the supervision of the Academy.[34]

Thus, what persuaded Picot, and the Académie des beaux-arts along with him, was the quality of both the portraits that Blanquart-Évrard submitted in early 1847 and those produced before the eyes of the Académie.[35] The commentator thus agreed with the argumentation of the author of the picture, since he had already demonstrated

the special potential of his process for portraying people with the two small tableaux vivants of September 1846 showing the photographer as an artist in his studio (Figures. 4.1 and 4.2).

By submitting a *faint* print together with a *correctly* developed one, Blanquart-Évrard picked up on the widely shared objection to Talbot's as well as Bayard's paper photographs as lacking contrast and distinction. And Blanquart-Évrard demonstrated with the counterpart to the first photograph, the second print, that his refined process was indeed capable of producing sharp and high-contrast photographs on paper that were moreover light resistant and therefore able to defy the adversities of time. With these two specimens, Blanquart-Évrard implicitly demonstrated that his photochemical methods were superior to those of his competitors, while he explicitly illustrated the degree of freedom the artist-photographer has in realizing the desired tonal values of his prints.[36]

All known sample pictures that the photographer enclosed with his submissions to the academies and artists' societies and later classified as 'historic pieces'[37] belong to two types: portraits, often staged in settings that bring genre paintings to mind, and reproductions of works of art. The prints he sent to Arago and the Académie des beaux-arts in January 1847 are extraordinary portraits of members of his family and friends, who sat for him individually (Figure 4.3) or in groups (Figure 4.4). As mentioned, some of the specimens are staged self-portraits of Blanquart-Évrard, who not only posed in various scenes but also slipped into a range of roles, appearing, for example, as a priest. What makes these photographs interesting is that they build on two different paradigms of visual representation. One is the principle of depiction *sur le vif* (from life); in this instance, photographs taken outdoors in which the sitters present themselves to the camera's eye in the settings of their daily lives and in *natural* attitudes – poses legitimized and motivated by the situations captured in the pictures. The other paradigm – which already informs the September 1846 submission – derives from the iconography of the collector's portrait. It underlies the majority of the captioned photographs that Blanquart-Évrard collected under the heading *Clichés sur papier: Épreuves adressées à l'institut à l'appui de la communication du 25 janvier 1847*.[38] They show interiors set up out of doors and decorated with a selection of precious objects from his family's home. One of these treasures, which are rearranged in new permutations from one picture to the next, can be spotted in several of the photographs: a 1693 painted portrait by Jacob II van Oost that Blanquart-Évrard would later donate to the Palais des beaux-arts in Lille (Figure 4.4).[39] According to Bernard Marbot, this set of pictures evinces 'warmth and atmosphere', something he calls a 'well-tempered realism of reverie'.[40] It is a peculiar quality, he argues, that is distinctive to early photographic prints based on paper negatives. By means of such photos, he thinks he can attest to the taste of those contemporaries who preferred and/or practised paper photography (rather than daguerreotypes).[41] With this observation, Marbot, a former curator of photography at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, reproduces the device of (pictorial) rhetoric that served to market paper photography in the mid-nineteenth century: its association with the picturesque. And he also identifies the visual paradigm on which all albums that Blanquart-Évrard produced in Lille are based.

Figure 4.3 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, Image of a smiling woman, 'Positive print from a paper negative to support the communication to the Institut de France, January 1847': later positive print, toned in chloride of gold, mounted on cardboard; from L D Blanquart Evrard *La Photographie: Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations* (Lille: Imprimerie L. Danel, 1869), Bibliothèque nationale de France, Côte réserve, Ad 304 4/BN 5b.

Figure 4.4 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, Group of two women, 'Positive print from a paper negative. Proof sent to the Institut [de France] to support the communication of 25 January 1847', salted paper print toned/bathed in hyposulphite of soda from a paper negative, 20.5 × 15 cm, Société française de photographie, Paris, inv. no. 41–98.

Voyages pittoresques: Staffage and landscapes

In Blanquart-Évrard's opinion, the vicious cycle of photography in 1851 was that 'photography produces nothing but portraits, & of which sort!', whereas only few amateurs were able to take pictures of architectural and scenic sights; and, of those working professionally, only a few were gifted with the artistic sense that would enable them to use lighting and poses to elevate the mechanical operation of the camera to the heights of art.[42] In his paper 'Photographie sur papier. Impression photographique' he goes on to draw a connection between this aesthetic stagnation and the discussions at the Société française de photographie on the need for a photographic printing establishment, which, as he writes, prompted him to submit his thoughts on improved paper photographic procedures and the commercial aspects of such an operation to the Académie des sciences. As in the past, he encloses sample pictures with his communications.

Discussing the reasons that led him to establish his Imprimerie in his review of the medium's history, Blanquart-Évrard not only refers to the main subjects of the *Voyages pittoresques* (views of buildings and sights (*sites*) that illustrate a region's specific characteristics, its *couleur locale*), he also mentions the one medium that was crucial to the dissemination of these images of picturesque scenes: lithography. He ascribed

to the latter an exemplary function because of its intertwining not only of a medium and its publication strategies (i.e. dedicated printing operations, subscription schemes, distribution of a predetermined number of plates at regular intervals etc.), but also of a medium representing these sights (*sites*) and its dissemination practices.

In founding his Imprimerie photographique, then, Blanquart-Évrard did not just aim to demonstrate the chemical-technical and economic viability of his processes, he also meant to prove an aesthetic point. Fittingly, the first work printed in Loos-lez-Lille in 1851 is titled *Album photographique de l'artiste et de l'amateur*. The designation gestures not only towards the intended audience – artists and photography amateurs as well as connoisseurs of contemporary paper photography – but also towards an aesthetic prototype: Charles Nodier, Baron Isidore Taylor and Alphonse de Cailleux's *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*. Notably, the first two volumes in the series, which had come out in 1820 and 1825, and the final volume, which was not published until 1878, are dedicated to *L'ancienne Normandie*. The north of France was central both to the iconography of the albums produced by Blanquart-Évrard and to his historiographical activities.[43]

In a 1938 study of French landscape lithography in the age of Romanticism, Jean Adhémar noted that the expression 'voyage pittoresque et romantique' came into use in mid-eighteenth-century France and initially comprised everything 'bearing on painting and the fine arts; a picturesque voyage was a catalogue of churches and palaces where one could admire works of art'.[44] This changed after around 1770, when, as Stendhal wittily put it in his *Mémoires d'un touriste*, a new meaning of 'picturesque' was imported to France from England together with good coaches and steamships.[45] The semantic shift was propelled by the French reception of Thomas Gilpin's *Observations relative to picturesque beauty*, published between 1770 and 1792. Gilpin used the term 'picturesque' to refer not to individual works of art and their enumeration but, in an aesthetic sense, to designate a middle or third concept between the sublime and the beautiful. His writings are not particularly systematic and offer a variety of definitions, but the characteristic picturesque landscape is a depiction of a rough scenery, suffused, like ruins overgrown with ivy, with an intimation of transitoriness.[46] Besides ruins, staffage – 'groupes heureux de personnages', in Adhémar's phrase – was a key element of the genre, for, as Gilpin already observed, 'besides the inanimate face of nature, its *living forms* fall under the picturesque eye, in the course of travel; and are often objects of great attention'.[47] In these animated sceneries, 'we merely consider general shapes, dresses, groups, and occupations; which we often find *casually* in greater variety, and beauty, than any selection can procure'.[48] The portfolios published in Loos-lez-Lille between 1851 and 1855 are both museums, which is to say, visual compendia cataloguing artistic treasures[49] and show picturesque landscapes 'accoutred' with decorative accessories and/or 'populated' by 'happy figures'.[50]

Even though all the subjects mentioned in treatises on the picturesque are found in Blanquart-Évrard's albums, in the photographs collected in the albums, these subjects cannot be situated unequivocally in a picturesque past. By the mid-nineteenth century, the imagery in the lithographic travel albums on which he modelled his products had changed, reflecting an increasingly modern pictorial conception.[51] The changes concerned the regions being illustrated as well as the objects rendered in the plates.

Farmhouses, for instance, appeared with growing frequency after 1830; Adhémar argues that the new motif represented a reaction to the unvarying Gothic edifices and an implicit rebuke to the picturesque, adding that it has widely been acknowledged that the depiction of a natural scene was enough in itself.[52] Yet the novel themes in the travel albums were also induced by the medium itself: as Ségolène Le Men writes, changing touristic practices went hand in hand with the evolution of the landscape as a pictorial genre and the representation of sites in images and writing. That is why she describes the *voyage pittoresque* as a 'museum of pictures' based on the technological innovations of lithography. Similarly, the pictorial archive surveying the realm of art that Blanquart-Évrard offered for sale, as well as what the individual pictures show, would not be what they are without the chemo-technical implications of photography.[53]

Contemporary critics discussing photographs compiled in albums often resorted to the metaphor of an imaginary voyage to characterize both the composition of these visual compendia and the act of perusal.[54] Francis Wey (1812–82) availed himself of this narratological strategy in his review of the first album brought out by the Imprimerie photographique in 1851, relating a voyage that takes us to Florence and Naples (where the works of art reproduced in the first two plates of the *Album de l'artiste et de l'amateur* are located) and back to the creator's native Flanders, to Ypres. If this narrative at first glance appears to follow the model of the picturesque voyage, his description of the fourth plate (Figure 4.5) underscores that we are now faced with something genuinely new. Photographed by Pierre Spotbeen, the 'Marketplace in Ypres' brims with stalls and merchandise, with fruits, vegetables and the haul of fishermen. Reading Wey's description – the lengths of fabric hung on strings, the heaps of produce and baskets piled up in pyramids – we think we can almost feel the physical texture of the offerings.[55] Because it seems to render life itself, the photograph of the market square – which, one should note, reappears in other albums in slightly different versions – is a picture *sur le vif* (*from life*).

Staffage *sur le vif*

In the first volume of his 1835 *Äesthetisches Lexicon*, Ignaz Jeitteles defines 'Beiwerk' – 'embellishments', 'accessories' or, in contemporary parlance, 'parerga' – as 'all subsidiary matters in graphic and visual art that, though not essential, contribute to the intelligibility of the main subject and help fill empty spaces'. Though a figment of 'invention', such material must 'appear to be subordinate' to the composition so as not to distract the beholder's 'attention' from the true object of interest in a picture.[56] Photographic images from the mid-nineteenth century that, like Spotbeen's marketplace view (Figure 4.5), show the scenes and activities of everyday life, bring matters to the fore that, per contemporary aesthetic theory, ought to be subordinate to the central composition, a shift of focus that Wey's ekphrasis highlights. Having trained his critical eye on the iconography and aesthetic preferences of the Romantic *Voyages pittoresques*, Wey does praise the late Gothic cathedral, which takes up no less than three-quarters of the picture's background, as well as the cloth hall of Ypres, which partly obscures it, another magnificent example of the Flamboyant style.[57] But he emphasizes that (everyday) life happens in the foreground, *au centre de la place*. 'It

Figure 4.5 Pierre Spotbeen, 'Marketplace in Ypres [Place de Marché à Ypres]'. Plate from the *Album photographique de l'artiste et de l'amateur*, printed by the Imprimerie photographique of Blanquart-Évrard in 1851; salted paper print, 15.9 × 20.8 cm. © Bibliothèque municipale de Lille, inv. no. album S 2–9, plate 410.

appears', Wey concludes, 'that this picture [*épreuve*] was obtained in very little time'.[58] The short exposure time, the instantaneity specified by the medium, becomes visible in the picture, in turn, and authenticates the scenery the photograph depicts.

The photograph's indexicality, which it owes to its optical-chemical genesis, enables the producer of pictures to record scenes 'after nature', *sur le vif*, not just in a conceptual sense but in actuality. As a consequence, the staffage that used to be thought of as mere embellishment has taken on a new role. Clamouring for the attention of the beholder of 1851, humans are *there*, present, in the foreground, and although their presence in the picture may be unintended – it presumably was in the case of the vehicles captured in many photographs that the Imprimerie photographique disseminated – they are invariably included. Even more, the groups of people and scenery rendered in the photographs appear so full of liveliness because they reveal the considerable inconsistency of scale between human figures and architecture that remains characteristic of lithographic depictions well after 1850 to be a stylistic contrivance. Through the leap in dimensions in the drawing of the scenery the beholder's eye is guided towards the buildings, while the staffage merely populates the scene. Photography, in contrast, naturalizes the depiction.[59]

Among all of Blanquart-Évrard's albums, the 1853 *Études photographiques* arguably reflects the changed pictorial modalities introduced by his Imprimerie photographique most vividly. Genre scenes and figures, which the *Voyages pittoresques* still shunted off into vignettes, have been stripped of their costumes and thus of any historicizing dimension, as well as the narratives bound up with it. The people who have found their way into the album are engaged in activities that the pictures visualize: the beholder can tell, or figure out, what they are doing. And even though photographs cannot render movement sequences except in static form, the figures seem to be in motion, their own attention absorbed by some action or the performance of a task.[60] This lends the photographs a proto-documentary quality, by which they can be related to the advent of Realism. What makes the *Études photographiques* stand out is that, although the figures may still have been arranged according to the representational conventions of the *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*, the peasants or visitors to the market – because they are photographed *sur le vif* – are representatives not of an 'ancient and romantic' France, but of the country's present. Here is a contemporary France in which real people are seen going about their business: cutting up apples (Figure 4.6), grinding knives, leading carts, mounting donkeys, making lace, playing cards, even taking an after-lunch nap (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.6 Unknown photographer, 'Female farmers, turning a mill [Paysannes faisant tourner un moulin]'. Plate from the *Album Études photographiques*, printed by the Imprimerie photographique of Blanquart-Évrard in 1853; salted paper print, 15.1 × 20 cm; mounted on cardboard 55 × 39 cm, © Bibliothèque municipale de Lille, inv. no. album S2-4, plate 177.

Figure 4.7 Unknown photographer, 'Farmer Family at rest in front of a shed with a thatched roof [Famille paysanne au repos, devant un hangar au toit de chaume]'. Plate from the *Album Études photographiques*, printed by the Imprimerie photographique of Blanquart-Évrard in 1853; salted paper print, 18 × 23.3 cm; mounted on cardboard 55 × 39 cm, © Bibliothèque municipale de Lille, inv. no. album S2–4, plate 201.

Limitations of the photographic: Art and chemistry

Blanquart-Évrard was not interested solely in animating the views depicted by means of *naturalized genre* scenes. Even if people going about their everyday business had been assigned a great significance since his sample pictures, the photo-chemist never forgot to stress the impact of photochemistry 'on reproducing nature'.[61] But it is not solely the subjects portrayed, but also the medial quality of the depiction that is the prerequisite for creating works of art based on 'unintelligent', hence apparatus-generated photographs. Blanquart-Évrard reflects on how this can occur – even years after his *Imprimerie photographique* was completed in 1855 – in the treatise he published in English in 1863, 'On the Intervention of Art in the Practice of Photography'. In it, he makes it clear that art has gained a foothold in photography not solely thanks to the representation of new subjects. He does so by showing us the dilemma of photographs reproducing human activities, which, because they can always only be based on a very brief moment, succeed in showing the potential influence that art is able to exert on such photographs. 'The … influence exercised by art' reduces

> the choice of the subject, the means of illumination, and the pose fall infinitely short of that which it is desired to attain, when it becomes a question of reproducing nature; far short as it is, however, it is easy to recognize it in the production of those operators who possess artistic skill, while its absence is equally obvious in the works of those who owe their success chiefly to science and facility of manipulation.[62]

Only a post-processing of the pictures would be able to offer a corrective to the suspension of the ability to be manipulated artistically that gives rise to the instantaneity of the photograph. What Blanquart-Évrard means with this, however, is not reverse engineering the positive, which he described in his submissions to the Académie des sciences of the years 1846–51 and visualized/exemplified by means of photographic portraits and reproductions of art. In 1863, he explains that photographs can only be artistic if – in addition to what is depicted – the quality of the print, its tonal values, the distribution of opaque and translucent pictorial fields are outstanding, something that can only be achieved by working on the negative. What Blanquart-Évrard means with this is not retouching with brush and colour, but rather chemical retouching, whose use, various procedures and pictorial effects he consequently describes in detail in his treatise. Hence, because a successful photographic picture requires the interplay of artistic skill and knowledge of the process, Blanquart-Évrard's endeavours aim at prolonging the brief moment in which the photograph is taken by providing chemical manipulations that enable the photographer to actively intervene in the process of developing the picture. 'The artistic achievement of which we are now speaking cannot be attained either by the pencil or the palette; it must remain purely chemical, in order to alter the outline and to allow the image to retain all its homogeneity and delicacy of execution.'[63] In addition to examining the pictorial subjects of contemporary art, which he transposes to photography and reproduces in this transformed way, it was hence always also the chemical conditions of photography that drove the amateur artist and art lover from Lille. Without taking the chemical foundations of photography into consideration, photographs can never be designed freely, and thus become art. This is the reason why Blanquart-Évrard is not solely a 'chemist and artist' as Davanne wrote, but also a photographic process technician who knew that art and thus the aesthetic potential of photography are based on its chemical foundations.

Translated from the German by Gerrit Jackson, revised by Amy Klement.

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Notes

1 Charles Hippolyte Fockedey (1804–73) was a (wholesale) merchant and director of the pawnbroker Mont-de-Piété in Lille, a predecessor institution of today's Caisses municipales. The building in which the Lille Mont-de-Piété was headquartered between 1626 and 1796 subsequently housed the Municipal Chair for Chemistry from 1824 until 1854 and then its successor organization, the École des arts industriels et des mines, until 1871. From 1856 until 1990, the building was moreover home to the city's Musée industriel et commercial, to which Blanquart-Évrard (1802–72) bequeathed the relics of both his Imprimerie and his Teaching Museum of Photography (an entirely deserved name). See Herta Wolf, 'Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrards Strategien des Beweisens', in Wolf ed., *Zeigen und/oder beweisen? Die Fotografie als Kulturtechnik und Medium des Wissens* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 179–217.

2 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, *La Photographie: Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations* (Lille: Imprimerie L. Danel, 1869), 26–7.

3 Ibid., 18–20, 22, 25–6, 26–7; see Francis Wey, 'Traité de photographie sur papier par M. Blanquart-Évrard (de Lille) avec une introduction de M. Georges Ville', *La Lumière* 1, no. 25 (27 July 1851): 99–100; and Francis Wey, 'Publications héliographiques', *La Lumière* 1, no. 28 (17 August 1851): 110–11.

4 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, 'Fondation d'une imprimerie photographique (1)', *La Lumière* 1, no. 34 (28 September 1851): 135. Entry no. 1551 in the catalogue of the Great Exhibition notes that Blanquart-Évrard's 'proofs were obtained in one minute at the utmost, by a new process, the particulars of which are not given. By this process, the inventor states, it is possible to obtain three hundred proofs in one day, even in winter'. *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations: Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue*, ed. Royal Commission, 3 vols, vol. III: *Foreign States* (London: Spicer Brothers, Wholesale Stationers, and W. Clowes and Sons, Printers, 1851), 1251.

5 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, 'Lettre', *La Lumière* 1, no. 10 (13 April 1851): 37–8, quote p. 37.

6 On these critics and the resulting competition between *La Lumière* and the Société française de photographie, see André Gunthert, 'L'Institution du photographique: Le roman de la Société héliographique', *Études photographiques*, 12 (November 2002): 4 and André Gunthert, 'La naissance de la Société française de photographie', in André Gunthert, Michel Poivert and Carole Troufléau (eds), *L'Utopie photographique: Regard sur la collection de la Société française de photographie* (Cherbourg: Le point du jour, 2004), 15–16.

7 See the two most extensive monographs: Isabelle Jammes's seminal thesis, 'Blanquart-Évrard et les origines de l'édition photographique française', Catalogue raisonné des albums photographiques édités 1851–5 (Thèse présentée à l'École Pratique des Hautes Études), Génève: Librairie Droz 1981 (= Histoire et civilisation du livre, Bd. 12), whose first chapter is titled 'Birth of an Industry' (ibid., 19–44) and Jean-Claude Gautrand, 'Blanquart-Évrard: De l'art à l'industrie', in Jean-Claude Gautrand and Alain Buisine, *Blanquart-Évrard* (Douchy-les-Mines: Centre régional de la photographie Nord Pas-de-Calais, 1999), 11–55.

8 See Gunthert, 'L'Institution du photographique', 40.

9 See the critical review of histories of photography that assume that photography was a mass medium by ca. 1851 in Pierre-Lin Renié, 'De l'imprimerie

photographique à la photographie imprimée: Vers une diffusion internationale des images (1850–1880)', *Études photographiques*, 20 (June 2007): 31.

10 At the time, Blanquart-Évrard donated several of these 'pièces historiques datant de ses premières communications à l'Académie des sciences' as well as 'épreuves-spécimens des travaux' from his defunct Imprimerie photographique to the Société française de photographie. See meeting of 8 January 1869, *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie* 15 (1869): 6.

11 The advent of photography was communicated by Arago to the Académie des sciences for the first time on 7 January 1839; as of this point in time, the permanent secretary for the mathematical sciences continued to publish discussions of the new medium and its processes in the *Journal of the Academy of Sciences* in Paris, the *Comptes rendus hebdomadaires des séances de l'Académie des sciences* (henceforth referred to as *CRAS*) (idem, 'Physique appliquée. Fixation des images qui se forment au foyer d'une chambre obscure', *Comptes rendus hebdomadaires des séances de l'Académie des sciences* 8 (1839): 4–6, meeting of 7 January 1839).

12 *Épreuve* is the standard French word for 'print', but with an unmistakable connotation of 'sample' or 'proof'.

13 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, letter to François Arago, 23 September 1846, Archives de l'Académie des sciences, *pochette* (folder) of the meeting of 28 September 1846. On Blanquart-Évrard's evidentiary strategies, also see Wolf, 'Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrards Strategien des Beweisens'.

14 Herta Wolf, '"Es werden Sammlungen jeder Art entstehen". Zeichnen und Aufzeichnen als Konzeptualisierungen der fotografischen Medialität' [2010], in Renate Wöhrer (ed.), *Wie Bilder Dokumente wurden. Zur Genealogie dokumentarischer Darstellungspraktiken* (Berlin: Kadmos, 2016), 27–50; Quentin Bajac, *Le daguerréotype français. Un objet photographique*, exh. cat. Musée d'Orsay (Paris: Ed. de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2003), figure 2, 58.

15 Herta Wolf, 'Collections of All Kinds Will Be Formed', *Photoresearcher: European Society for the History of Photography* 13 (2010): 54–64.

16 Blanquart-Évrard, letter to Arago, 23 September 1846, Archives de l'Académie des sciences, *pochette* (folder) of the meeting of 28 September 1846.

17 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, *Traité de photographie sur papier: Avec une introduction par M. Georges Ville* (Paris: Librairie Encyclopédique de Roret, 1851).

18 Benjamin Corenwinder, 'Discours prononcé sur la tombe de M. Blanquart-Évrard, le 28 avril', *Mémoires de la Société des sciences, de l'agriculture et des arts de Lille* 10 (1872): 665–70; Louis-Alphonse Davanne, 'M. Davanne fait part de la mort de M. Blanquar[t]-Évrard', *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie* 18, no. 5 (1872), meeting of 3 May 1872, 114–16. Jammes, 'Blanquart-Évrard et les origines', 22, and Jean-Claude Gautrand, 'Blanquart-Évrard: De l'art à l'industrie', 17, rely on these two assessments.

19 André Thépot, 'Frédéric Kuhlmann: Industriel et notable du Nord, 1803–1882', *Revue du Nord* 67, no. 265, Industrialisation de la France. Aspects et problèmes XVIIIe-XXe siècles (April–June 1985): 527–46, 530; Jean-Marie Schmitt, 'Charles Frédéric Kuhlmann', in Jean-Pierre Kintz and Charles Baechler (eds), *Nouveau dictionnaire de biographie alsacienne*, vol. 22 (Strasbourg: Fédération des sociétés d'histoire et d'archéologie d'Alsace, 1994), 2142; on laboratory practice and chemistry education in France, see Ulrike Fell, *Disziplin, Profession und Nation: Die Ideologie der Chemie in Frankreich vom Zweiten Kaiserreich bis in die Zwischenkriegszeit* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2000).

20 Corenwinder, 'Discours prononcé sur la tombe de M. Blanquart-Évrard', 666. Benjamin Corenwinder (1820–84), who was president of the Société des sciences, de l'agriculture et des arts de Lille at the time, wrote this obituary. He had likewise studied with Kuhlmann and was his assistant in 1847, when Blanquart-Évrard first submitted his work to the Académie des sciences.

21 Davanne, 'M. Davanne fait part de la mort de M. Blanquar[t]-Évrard', 114–15. Blanquart-Évrard's close relationship with Kuhlmann is also attested to by his photographs of the chemist in the style of collector's portraits; Kuhlmann's wife, moreover, is among the sitters in Blanquart-Évrard's 1846–7 sample pictures.

22 Blanquart-Évrard, letter to Arago, 23 September 1846.

23 'Correspondance [M. Arago présente, au nom de M. Blanquart-Évrard, une suite de belles images photographiques sur papier]', *CRAS* 23 (1846), meeting of 7 December 1846, 1083.

24 Georges Ville, 'Essai sur l'histoire et le progrès de la photographie', in Blanquart-Évrard, *Traité de photographie sur papier*, xxv. Ville is among the few authors who mention Blanquart-Évrard's wealth in order to underscore that his photographic activities and innovations were not motivated by the pursuit of personal gain.

25 The same practice, he believed, prompted the critical disapproval of the quality of his photographs (Blanquart-Évrard, *La Photographie. Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations*, 25). See, for example, *Lectures on the Results of the Great Exhibition of 1851, Delivered before the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the Suggestion of H. R. H. Prince Albert* (London: David Bogue, 1852), 378.

26 See the photographs by Blanquart-Évrard in the Album Regnault (Société française de photographie), 'Tableau de Léopold Robert, F.H.', no. 57: 35; 'Tableau de Léopold Robert, F.H.'; no. 58: 37, 151 × 102.

27 Archives de l'Académie des beaux-arts 5 E 34, chemise 'Lettres des particuliers', lettre du 10 janvier accompagnée de la lettre du 17 février de M. Lestiboudois; see also *Procès-verbaux de l'Académie des beaux-arts*, vol. 8: *1845–1849*, ed. Sybille Bellamy-Brown (Paris: École des Chartes, 2008), 204.

28 Besides Biot and Regnault, the committee consisted of the painter and engraver Louis Hersent (1777–1860), the architect François Debret (1777–1850), the sculptor Louis Petitot (1794–1862), the painter and engraver Auguste Gaspard Louis Desnoyers (1779–1857), the history painter François-Édouard Picot (1786–1868), the sculptor Auguste Dumont (1801–84), the painter and medalist Jacques Edouard Gatteaux (1788–1881) and the architect and member of the Institut de France Louis-Hippolyte Lebas (1782–1867).

29 Procès-verbaux de l'Académie des beaux-arts, vol. 8, 220.

30 Meeting of Saturday, 19 June 1847, ibid., 235.

31 Louis-Victor Bougron, 'Rapport au nom de la commission* chargée d'examiner les procédés de M. Blanquart-Évrard, de Lille, pour obtenir des Épreuves photographiques sur papier. Séance du 20 avril 1847', *Annales de la Société libre des beaux-arts* xvii (Comprenant trois années Académiques, du 1er mai 1847 au 1er mai 1850): 222–6; in addition to the report's author, the committee included the painter Rouget and the engraver Ransonette. Founded on 18 October 1830, the Société libre des beaux-arts was an association of artists and art enthusiasts affiliated with the editorial board of the *Journal des Artistes* that dedicated itself to promoting the arts and artists; it also managed a hardship fund for artists in need. See https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Société_libre_des_beaux-arts_de_Paris (accessed 27 August 2015).

32 'Physique appliquée – Procédé de M. Daguerre [Voici textuellement ce que M. Talbot mande aux deux académiciens d. Procédé de M. Daguerre, Londres, le 29 janvier 1839]', in: *CRAS* 8 (1839), meeting of 4 February 1839, 170–4: 171; François Arago, 'Le Daguerréotype', *CRAS* 9 (1839), meeting of 19 August 1839, 251–67 (this account repeats his report to the Chambre des Deputés of 3 June 1839); Herta Wolf, 'Nature as a Drawing Mistress', in Mirjam Brusius, Katrina Dean and Chitra Ramalingan (eds), *William Henry Fox Talbot: Beyond Photography*, Studies in British Art, vol. 23 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 119–42.

33 François-Édouard Picot, 'Rapport sur le procédé et les produits photographiques de M. Blanquart-Évrard, lu à l'Académie le samedi 19 juin 1847', in *Procès-verbaux de l'Académie des beaux-arts*, vol. 8, 235–9, 236; Jacques Charles (1746–1823) was a French physicist, chemist and inventor, who made proto-photographic experiments with non-permanent photosensitive material in around 1780; he was mentioned by Arago as forerunner of photography (see 'Physique appliquée. – Procédé de M. Daguerre [Voici textuellement ce que M. Talbot mande aux deux académiciens d. Procédé de M. Daguerre, Londres, le 29 janvier 1839]', in *CRAS* 8 (1839), meeting of 4 February 1839, 170–4, 171, and Arago, Le Daguerréotype', 253.

34 Picot, 'Rapport sur le procédé et les produits photographiques de M. Blanquart-Évrard, lu à l'Académie le samedi 19 juin 1847', 236–7.

35 See Wolf, 'Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrards Strategien des Beweisens'; Herta Wolf, 'Übersetzungen: Wissenstranspositionen in frühen fotografischen Handbüchern', *Fotogeschichte* 38, no. 150, Polytechnisches Wissen, ed. Herta Wolf (Winter 2018): 5–16.

36 In 1853, Francis Wey commented on the superiority of Blanquart-Évrard's photographic processes over those of Talbot, when he writes that the latter failed in making portraits, while Blanquart-Évrard even succeeded in reproducing the facial features of in the demonstration of his abilities before the Académie des beaux-arts (Francis Wey, 'Comment le soleil est devenu peintre. Histoire du daguerreotype', in *Musée des Familles. Lectures du soir*, July (1853), 289–300, 293. See William Henry Fox Talbot's letter to David Brewster of 20 October 1851, in which he complains that the 'French have shown a fixed determination to claim for themselves the invention of photography on paper, although purely of English origin from first to last' (National Science and Media Museum, Bradford, Collection number 1937–4989, The Correspondence of WHF Talbot, http://foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk/letters/transcriptDate.php?month=10&year=1851&pageNumber=13&pageTotal=23&referringPage=0, accessed 26 January 2020).

37 Session of 8 January 1869, *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie* 15 (1869): 6.

38 These pictures are held in the collection of the Société française de photographie as well as included in the luxury edition of *La Photographie. Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations* at the Bibliothèque nationale (BNF Côte réserve, Ad 304 4).

39 Jacob II van Oost, *Portrait de Nazaire Joseph d'Angeville, vicomte de Lompnes-en-Bugey, lieutenant-colonel d'infanterie étrangère*, 1693, Palais des beaux-arts de Lille, inv. P 106. Cordélia Hattori (Cabinet des Dessins) and François Becuwe (Collections de numismatique, Informatique documentaire), both Palais des beaux-arts de Lille, in email correspondence with the author, 11 February 2015; I am most grateful to them for assisting me with information.

40 Bernard Marbot, 'Blanquart-Évrard, Ill. 25 a + b. Deux sujets', in 'Catalogue', in *Regards sur la photographie en France au XIXe siècle: 180 chefs-d'œuvres du département des estampes et de la photographie*, exh. cat., Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1980), n.p.

41 Ibid; see as well the contributions of Paul-Louis Roubert to the relationship in between Daguerreotypy and paper photography in France (i.e. id., '"Dies wird jenes töten …". Der Niedergang der Praxis der Daugerreotypie in Frankreich durch die Publikationen von Amateuren', *Fotogeschichte. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Ästhetik der Fotografie* 38, no. 150 (Winter), 2018: 27–35 (Polytechnisches Wissen. Fotografische Handbücher 1839 bis 1918).

42 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, 'Physique appliquée. Photographie sur papier. Impression photographique', *CRAS* 32 (1851), séance du 14 avril, 555–6. The letter was reprinted both in *La Lumière* ('Note sur l'héliographie sur papier et sur l'impression héliographique', *La Lumière* 1, no. 12 (27 April 1851): 45) and in his retrospective outline of the medium's history (*La Photographie: Ses origines, ses progrès, ses transformations*, 24–5).

43 Charles Nodier (1780–1844), Baron Isidore Taylor (1789–1879) and Alphonse de Cailleux (1788–1876) (eds), *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France: Ancienne Normandie*, vols. 1 and 2 (Paris: P. Didot L'Ainé, 1820 and 1825); Baron Isidore Taylor (ed.) *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France: Ancienne Normandie*, vol. 3 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1878). Blanquart-Évrard served on the Commission historique du département du Nord; see Corenwinder, 'Discours prononcé sur la tombe de M. Blanquart-Évrard', 669. And see Anne de Mondenard, 'Les campagnes photographiques en Normandie', in Lucie Goujard et al. (eds), *Voyages pittoresques* (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2009), 127–35, 127–9.

44 Jean Adhémar, 'Les lithographies de paysage en France à l'époque romantique', in Louis Réau, Jean Messelet and Jean Adhémar, *Carle Vanloo, Jean Restout: Les Lithographies de paysages en France à l'époque romantique*, Archives de l'art français, nouvelle période, vol. XIX (Paris: Armand Colin, 1938), 190–283, 199. He identifies Dézallier d'Argenville's *Voyages pittoresques de Paris, ou Indicateur de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cette ville en peinture, sculpture et architecture* of 1747 as the first source for the phrase. Jean Adhémar (1908–87) acted as curator of the 'Cabinet des Estampes' of the French Bibliothèque national from 1932 to 1961, before becoming head of the department (1961–77) which he renamed the 'département des Estampes et de la photographie' in 1974.

45 Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1854), vol. I, 87, quoted in Adhémar, 'Les lithographies de paysage en France à l'époque romantique', 200.

46 Jörn Glasenapp, 'Das Bild stets vor Augen oder William Gilpin und der pittoreske Landschaftskult des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts', in Michael Scheffel (ed.), *Erschriebene Natur: Internationale Perspektiven auf Texte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bern: Lang, 2001), 169–88, 171.

47 Adhémar, 'Les lithographies de paysage en France à l'époque romantique', 200, with reference to Gilpin's *An Essay upon Prints, Containing Remarks upon the Principles of Picturesque Beauty* (London: J. Robson, 1768) and T. D. Fosbroke, *The Tourist's Grammar; or, Rules Relating to the Scenery and Antiquities Incident to Travellers; Compiled from the Best Authorities and Including an Epitome of Gilpin's Principles of the Picturesque* (London, 1826). The word, from a French root, entered the English language via Dutch and German and designates 'small figures and animals not essential to the subject but … used to animate the composition'; see *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Arts and Artists*, 4th ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 599.

48 William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; on Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape: With a Poem, on Landscape Painting. To These Are Now Added*

Two Essays, Giving an Account of the Principles and Mode in Which the Author Executed His Own Drawings (1792), 3rd ed. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1808), 44–5.

49 This aspect is suggested by the titles of some of the albums: see, for example, *Musée photographique* (1853), *Galerie photographique* (1853), *Paris photographique* (1851) and *L'Art contemporain* (1854).

50 Adhémar, 'Les lithographies de paysage en France à l'époque romantique', 234, 230.

51 Ibid., 248.

52 In Adhémar's telling, this tendency was just a fad (ibid., 248).

53 Ségolène Le Men, 'Les voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France de Taylor et Nodier: Un monument de papier', in Lucie Goujard et al. (ed.), *Voyages pittoresques*, 39–63, 47.

54 See, for example, Ernest Lacan, 'De la photographie et de des diverses applications aux beaux arts et aux sciences', excerpt from an article in *Le Moniteur Universel: Journal officiel de l'Empire Français*, 12 January 1855, 45–7, *La Lumière* 5, no. 3 (20 January 1855): 11–12.

55 Francis Wey, 'Album photographique de M. Blanquart-Évrard', *La Lumière* 1, no. 33 (21 September 1851): 130–1, 131.

56 Ignaz Jeitteles, 'Beiwerk', in *Äethetisches Lexicon: Ein alphabetisches Handbuch zur Theorie der Philosophie des Schönen und der schönen Künste nebst Erklärung der Kunstausdrücke aller ästhetischen Zweige, als: Poesie, Poetik, Rhetorik, Musik, Plastik, Graphik, Architektur, Malerei, Theater etc.*, 2 vols, vol. 1: A bis K (Vienna: Carl Gerold, 1835), 90. His conception of staffage follows Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's definition of the term; see the latter's 'Etwas über Staffage landschaftlicher Darstellungen', *Propyläen: Eine periodische Schrift*, 3 (1800): 153–6.

57 Wey extols the beauty of Ypres: 'où l'architecture gothique orientale fleurissait et se festonnait de dentelles légères, finement brodées sur un fond de brume'. Wey, 'Album photographique de M. Blanquart-Évrard', 131.

58 Ibid.

59 In the three volumes of the *Voyages pittoresques dans l'ancienne France*, there are different modes of depicting figures: in vignettes or as staffage figures, their function – regardless of their scale, since they can be taller or smaller than in nature – is to act as *a humble servant* of the depiction of the architecture; see, for example, plate 12, 'Ruines de l'Abbaye de Jumièges Coté du Nord', drawn by Jacques Mandé Daguerre in 1820, lithographed by Godefroy Engelmann (1788–1839) in Baron Isidore Taylor (ed.), *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France, Ancienne Normandie*, 1, Paris (Firmin-Didot), 1820.

60 In this respect, the images notably match Gilpin's pictorial ideas: 'when the anatomy is perfectly just, the human body will always be more picturesque in action, than at rest'. Gilpin, *Three Essays*, 12–13.

61 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, 'On the Intervention of Art in the Practice of Photography' in *The British Journal of Photography* 10, no. 185 (1 and 15 August 1863): 302–4 and 326–7, 302. In the French original the problem is focused directly when Blanquart-Évrard explains that 'la part laissé à l'art' is a small 'lorsqu'il s'agit de la nature vivante' ('Intervention de l'art dans la photographie' in *Mémoires de la Société des sciences, de l'agriculture et des arts de Lille*, vol. 9, meeting of 6 February and 17 April 1863, pp. 149–63 and 443–6: 149).

62 Louis Désiré Blanquart-Évrard, 'On the Intervention of Art in the Practice of Photography' in *The British Journal of Photography*, p. 302.

63 Ibid.

5

Picturesque Conflict: Photography and the Aesthetics of Violence in the Nineteenth-Century British Empire

Sean Robert Willcock

This chapter considers the tension between aesthetic inclinations and ethical concerns in early photographic engagements with the horrors of war. The first photograph to explicitly show the victims of conflict, Felice Beato's *Interior of Secundrabagh after the Massacre* (1858) (Figure 5.1), is a shocking record of destructive violence, even by modern standards. Skulls, ribcages, femurs, pelvises: a horrific explosion of bones dominates the foreground of the scene. The photograph documents the site of a British victory over insurgent fighters in Lucknow, northern India, in March 1857. The remains are those of Indian 'mutineers', scattered in front of an architectural ruin as if the victors had left the slaughtered to decompose wherever they had fallen. But this was not in fact the case. By the time that Beato – a commercial photographer – arrived at this location, the bodies had long since been buried. He arranged for their exhumation in order to make this photograph. The desire for an adequate photograph of battle's aftermath thus guided Beato's interaction with the site in profound ways, creating what Christopher Pinney has called 'a complex reanimation of the Uprising as a theatrical spectacle'.[1] Such a dark interference with the locale points to how photography was starting to shape the terms of engagement with even the most sensitive aspects of life and death. Yet, radically new as such photography was, its 'ethics of seeing', to use Susan Sontag's phrase, was rooted in a longstanding and popular artistic tradition: the picturesque.[2]

The aestheticization of suffering and destruction did not emerge as a new problematic for the Victorians with the invention of photography in 1839. The picturesque embrace of rugged and irregular formal qualities had already fostered some morally dubious visual pleasures at the sight of ramshackle dwellings and beggars' rags. This extraction of formal values from social ills provided the cover for a budding war photographer like Beato to command the production of such a sepulchral tableau during this vicious colonial war in India. One year before Beato's photographic engagement with death and devastation, the art critic John Ruskin declared that 'the modern feeling of the picturesque, which, so far as it consists in a delight in ruin, is perhaps the most suspicious and questionable of all the characters distinctively belonging to our temper, and art'.[3] Such picturesque visuality – established by theorists like William Gilpin in the

Figure 5.1 Felice Beato, *Interior of Secundrabagh after the Massacre*, 1858, albumen silver print, 24 × 28.7 cm. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 84.XO.421.13. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

eighteenth century and still popular by Ruskin's day – provided a framework within which photography's ethical relationship to the world could be negotiated.

Ruskin's critique of the 'lower' picturesque sentiment as 'eminently a *heartless* one' preempts more recent scholarship in his suggestion that the aesthetic was not simply a set of harmless conventions prioritizing rough textures, irregularity and ruins;[4] it was a modern way of seeing which, 'with its almost exclusive emphasis on visual appreciation, entailed a suppression of the spectator's moral response'.[5] Photography partook in the 'hardening'[6] of modern feeling that Ruskin identified within the picturesque temperament, fostering what Zahid R. Chaudhary has termed a 'phantasmagoric aesthetic' – a structure of perception that desensitized colonials to the sensory shock-effects that Walter Benjamin famously identified as symptomatic of industrial modernity.[7] In Chaudhary's complex reading of shock, photography and perception in nineteenth-century British India, the picturesque is seen as an instantiation of a modern perceptual 'habitus' – an ingrained way of seeing – that regulated the colonial encounter by providing 'aesthetic armor' against threatening new stimuli.[8] I want to highlight the potential ambivalence of this modern, protective reflex of aestheticization.

The picturesque way of seeing, in its very manner of regulating shocking experience via visual conventions, could confront the British with their dubious capacity to enjoy what Henry A. Giroux terms 'an aesthetics of depravity': human suffering 'subordinated to the formal properties of beauty, design and taste'.[9] Thus, at the same time as it enabled modern subjects to respond to poverty, war or ruin with aesthetic satisfaction, the picturesque disposition was also unsettling. The very fact that such extremities could be perceived 'picturesquely' was itself shocking – hence Ruskin's anxiety. Such ambivalence is primarily evident, I suggest, in the initial, sensory encounter with a reality that is or could be disturbing, when the situation is responded to in terms of aesthetics rather than in more 'ethical' (to the Victorians) ways. Adapting picturesque artistic motifs for the camera was a process infused with particular drama, especially when it involved composing bodies (alive and dead) under the shadow of violence. So, as successful as any resulting picturesque images might have been at providing aesthetic comfort or pleasure, the actual process of responding to modernity's horrors by making pictures out of them was something that could strain against ethical mores. This article explores the transgressive potential of 'picturesque' violence, as the British attempted to reassert their control over an insurrectionary subcontinent by choreographing photographic tableaux at traumatic sites of Anglo-Indian massacre.

Picturesque violence

Even without any knowledge of the summary hangings and arbitrary punishments of Indians happening beyond the frame of Beato's *Secundrabagh*, the grouping of the living and the dead in relation to the architectural ruin has a disturbing resonance. There is something about the postures of the four Indian men – standing against the backdrop of a battle-ravaged building, with the scattered bones of the slain spread out before them – that hints at their vulnerability. The figures hardly have the mien of gloating victors. Their necrotic positioning next to the remains of their compatriots frames their lives in terms of what Judith Butler has called 'precarity': a 'politically induced condition in which certain populations […] become differentially exposed to injury, violence, and death'.[10]

The horse softens the impact of the scene, with a certain order being re-imposed on the chaos of war through the inclusion of a domesticated animal. The horse is harnessed and docile, its presence recalling the pastoralism common in picturesque aesthetics, whereby elements of wildness are counterbalanced by signs of human habitation and control. The conventional nature of Beato's photograph is evident from an engraving after the eighteenth-century colonial artist, William Hodges, whose *A View of the Gate of the Tomb of the Emperor Akbar, at Secundra* also depicts passive Indian *staffage* congregated around the faded grandeur of architectural ruins (Figure 5.2).[11] Such picturesque strategies have been seen by scholars as archetypically imperial, domesticating alien terrains and working to provide a coherent expression of Britain's empire by making diverse landscapes submit to familiar visual schemata.[12]

Beato – a versatile photographer – drew on such longstanding and popular picturesque traditions at the same time as he engaged in more documentary modes of practice.[13] By using classic landscape motifs – equine and human *staffage* – Beato

Figure 5.2 John Browne after William Hodges, *A View of the Gate of the Tomb of the Emperor Akbar, at Secundra*, 1786, etching, 46.5 × 62.2 cm. © The British Library Board, P2327.

situated modern war's horrors within a familiar aesthetic register, deploying a partial idiom of picturesqueness to help manage the reception of an imagery for which there was little precedent. As Ruskin wrote, the 'sight of disorder and ruin' could be readily embraced by the picturesque adept: 'Fallen cottage – desolate villa – deserted village – blasted heath – mouldering castle – to him […] they do but show jagged angles of stone and timber, [and] all are sights equally joyful.'[14]

Yet Beato's transformation of 'brutality into beauty' involved more than the straightforward application of picturesque motifs.[15] Two years after Beato took *Secundrabagh* in 1858, he had moved eastward to China to chronicle the Second Opium War (1856–60). Following one battle, a British medical surgeon, Dr David Field Rennie, recalled walking past 'distressing' scenes of 'frightful mutilations' and heaps of 'dead and dying', only to find Beato in a state of 'great excitement', standing next to a group of corpses and 'begging that it might not be interfered with until perpetuated by his photographic apparatus'. Dr Rennie's horror at the sight of 'carnage' contrasts dramatically with Beato's happy photographic engagement: the latter even called the scene 'beautiful'.[16] The resulting images (Figure 5.3), while meditating on ruin, do not

Figure 5.3 Felice Beato, *Angle of North Taku Fort at Which the French Entered*, 1860, albumen silver print, 22.3 × 30 cm. J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles 2007.26.112. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

appear conventionally 'picturesque' in their composition and leave one quite at a loss to discern 'beauty' in any traditional sense. Rather, the term would appear to borrow clumsily from established artistic discourse in order to articulate the compelling visual interest of 'carnage' from the inchoate perspective of documentary reportage (Beato clearly saw the value in chronicling current affairs, moving from the Crimean War to the Indian Uprising to the Anglo-Sino conflict in just five years). At this early stage in photography's history, there was no established photojournalistic framework in which to interpret such image-making encounters.

At a general level, the encounter between Beato and the Chinese bodies indicates the 'changing perceptual arrangements of modernity', a habitus instantiated first by the picturesque disposition and then by photography, in which the world was routinely converted into a picture in order to experience it.[17] The processes of image-making – and the language and conventions of aesthetics – were thus increasingly starting to regulate the affective resonance of even the most extreme scenes. Dr Rennie, seeing the devastation in terms of the suffering of flesh-and-blood bodies, finds the scene 'distressing', while Beato, perceiving the same scene in explicitly pictorial terms, appears

in his aesthetic 'excitement' to be devoid of sympathetic response. So, even when Beato did not adopt explicitly picturesque devices, he embodied the ethically stunted way of seeing that Ruskin had identified in people (himself included) who got 'rid of all claims of … compassion by treating all distress more as picturesque than as real'.[18]

In an 1845 letter to his parents, Ruskin had rehearsed the ethical anxieties that would ultimately make their way into his disquisition on the picturesque in *Modern Painters*, confessing that he had a certain artistic investment in suffering:

> Yesterday, I came on a poor little child lying flat on the pavement in Bologna – sleeping like a corpse – possibly from too little food. I pulled up immediately not in pity, but in delight at the folds of its poor little ragged chemise over the thin bosom and gave the mother money not in charity, but to keep the flies off it while I made a sketch.[19]

Ruskin's response to human misery here is startlingly similar to Beato's in China, with a dubious aesthetic pleasure sparking the selfish desire to leave everything in place for the sake of a picture. It anticipates Susan Sontag's concern, over 100 years later, that the *photographic* way of seeing is predicated on a cold abdication of social responsibility, being 'a way of at least tacitly, often explicitly, encouraging whatever is going on to keep on happening … to be in complicity with whatever makes a subject interesting, worth photographing'.[20] Indeed, Ruskin's unease over the pathologies of the picturesque mindset in the mid-nineteenth century is strikingly similar to the anxiety that has since motivated a good portion of modern scholarship on photography, indicating that the new technology did not give rise to a novel moral problematic, but reiterated the structure of feeling apparent in an earlier artistic disposition (the picturesque), while raising the ethical stakes by introducing an indexical element to the relationship between the image and the (suffering) referent.

What were the consequences of such aestheticized responses to human suffering and death? In Chaudhary's reading of photography in nineteenth-century India, colonials adopted what he terms a 'phantasmagoric aesthetic': a perceptual mode under which modernity's shocks are dealt with by shielding oneself from stimuli in a process of 'sensory self-alienation', a domination over one's own feelings which becomes the precondition for dominating others, be that through reducing populations to biopolitical statistical patterns or attempting, like Beato, to transform the chaos of war into 'aesthetically coherent assemblages of a reality placed at a distance and on display'.[21] Such a reading follows Susan Buck-Morss in its conception of aesthetics not simply in terms of pictorial conventions, but as a means of shaping one's sensory engagement with the world: a protective filter between inner and outer.[22] Numbing oneself through the 'anaesthetising' qualities of aesthetic mediation was highly useful in political situations that required the maintenance of brutal hierarchies, when excesses of sympathy could threaten the stratified social order (hence Benjamin's famous contention that the 'aestheticisation of politics' constituted the precondition for fascism).[23]

Yet, as Ruskin's interrogation of his own picturesque mediation of experience demonstrates, a certain affective numbness could coexist – even in the same person – with an ethical anxiety about that very numbness; there was, it seems, an undertow

to 'merciless' aesthetic engagements with suffering.[24] As John Macarthur argues in his account of Ruskin's critique of the picturesque, there was a deep ambivalence to the picturesque aestheticization of misfortune: 'At the sight of human misery we are jolted, disgusted (at the objects and then at ourselves for aestheticizing them).'[25] Compared to Ruskin, Beato is an inscrutable historical figure, in spite of his commercial success. No writings of his exist to give us a sense of the moral psychology behind his photography, but the popularity of his morbid images does not necessarily indicate that colonials were unconflicted about his aestheticization of violence. One man's 'beauty' could be another's 'carnage', and the aesthetic approach to war, far from mitigating shock, could itself be shocking.

This is made fairly plain in an account of Beato's dark interference with Indian bodies for the purposes of his *Secundrabagh* photograph. The Judicial Commissioner of Lucknow, Sir George Campbell, recalled that by the time Beato had arrived in the city many months after its re-capture by colonial armies, 'the great pile of bodies had been *decently* covered before the photographer could take them, but he *insisted* on having them uncovered to be photographed before they were finally disposed of'.[26] Here we get the perspective of a prominent agent of the colonial state: Campbell was responsible for the exercise of judicial functions and the management of jails, as well as having 'all the powers of a High Court'.[27] Given the extent of public hangings in Lucknow in 1858, it is unlikely that Campbell was unused to grisly sights, so his apparent distaste for Beato's actions is perhaps somewhat hypocritical. Still, the fact that Beato was able to 'insist' on exposing corpses that had once been 'decently' covered – note the distinction between an unseemly photographic demand on the one hand and an ethical treatment of the dead on the other – points to a form of authority residing outside of the (by implication) 'decent' order of the colonial state.

Such imagery could thus be experienced in terms of transgression: according to Campbell, it was a 'very horrible' photograph that Beato made in Lucknow. Photography was a new medium and as such it was of particular interest to bystanders – and some of its ability to disrupt norms was surely drawn from this novel technological status. Yet Beato's macabre photographic inclinations gained traction in a culture already habituated to the routine picturesque consumption of 'disorder and ruin'. A preoccupation, rooted in eighteenth-century aesthetics, with the formal properties of a scene had created the conditions in which a potentially distressing reality could be dealt with as an occasion for a picture, but such a cool manoeuvre could itself be disturbing, even leading, as Ruskin feared, and as Campbell's comment implies, to a loss of moral authority. 'Ruskin's disgust at picturesqueness,' Macarthur writes, 'is in exact parallel to the picturesque viewer's having forgotten to be disgusted.'[28] Likewise, Beato, consumed by the pictorial interest of corpses, 'forgets' to be disgusted – an omission that appears unseemly to colonial onlookers in India and China.

I do not want to push this point too far – Beato was certainly no pariah, and the shock-value of his photographs was likely an important part of their marketability in colonial circles – but considering Campbell's perception of horrid indecency, and bearing in mind Dr Rennie's exposure of the 'frightful mutilations' that Beato took for 'beauty', it is apparent that the aesthetic mediation – indeed, in the case of Beato's grave-digging, the deliberate intensification – of shocking subjects was experienced

as troubling or indecorous, at least at the moment of image-making itself. This could account for the fact that, while violence remained a key aspect of the colonial experience – particularly on the frontiers of empire – explicit photographs of it are a relative rarity in the colonial archive, in spite of camera technologies becoming increasingly affordable and prevalent. The public circulation of such images had the potential to scandalize: in 1886, Captain Willoughby Wallace Hooper caused a public outcry and parliamentary enquiry when the *Times* ran an exposé regarding his practice of photographing the execution-by-firing-squad of Burmese 'dacoits'.[29] The newspaper claimed that 'the photographing of the prisoners … was not an isolated case,' a fact backed up by none other than the Viceroy of India, who admitted that he had 'heard of prisoners being photographed on such occasions'.[30]

Such episodes of aestheticized violence can be seen in terms of a conflicted habitus: what Pierre Bourdieu called the 'system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action' that provide the coordinates for thought and agency within a society.[31] Both Chaudhary and Pinney have drawn on the habitus to theorize colonial photographic culture, the former emphasizing its status as a mode of 'aesthetic comportment – the a priori grasping of the world as a picture' (a process which the picturesque 'formalizes'), and the latter stressing its technomaterial and institutional components, in which colonial bureaucracy, transport networks and commerce 'came to define in certain respects the proper use of photography'.[32] Yet, in the face of violence, the *perceptual* habitus which regulated experience by digesting it as a picture was not fully normalized or integrated at an ethical level with the wider social habitus – the 'tacit system of codes which quietly encode a lifeworld' – even as the former sometimes managed to pursue its ends within the latter with some success, from perspectives both logistical (Beato was permitted to act like this by the colonial authorities) and commercial (Beato's imagery was popular).[33] The modern, pictorializing disposition could be offensive to British sensibilities, even amid the anomie of bitter imperial warfare.

Aesthetics vs ethics

The extent to which picturesque inclinations could transgress social mores is revealed in a surprising body of images: the tranquil, picture-postcard photography generated by a popular colonial war shrine in Cawnpore following the Uprising. Cawnpore was a highly charged space following wartime atrocities in which colonial men, women and children had been butchered by Indian rebels in the early stages of the insurrection against colonial rule, leading to a systematically brutal – and gruesomely creative – British vengeance. This was an extraordinarily emotive site, symbolic of unparalleled imperial vulnerability and loss; it conjured memories of vicious racial violence and triggered fears of new insurgencies. Popular photographs of the memorial like Samuel Bourne's *The Memorial Well, Cawnpore* (c. 1865) (Figure 5.4) managed the intense resonances of the space via recourse to archetypically picturesque strategies of representation, portraying the memorial park in terms of idyllic tranquillity. Yet what we encounter in such scenes are not only artistic motifs to be decoded. The

Figure 5.4 Samuel Bourne, *The Memorial Well, Cawnpore*, c.1865, albumen silver print, 18.7 × 31.6 cm. © The British Library Board, 11/(45).

performance of picturesque traditions by real Indian men posing as *staffage* placed aesthetic inclinations into significant tension with other colonial sensitivities regarding the park, even compromising the sanctity of the colonial space.

Picturesque conventions may have sanctioned the figure of an Indian as *staffage* on this spot, but the politics of mourning that had prevailed among the British in Cawnpore following the Uprising had explicitly sought to sanctify the memorial by banning Indians, who required a special permit to enter the park.[34] The official prohibition was policed by a truculent British veteran of the Uprising – one of the only colonial survivors of the Cawnpore massacre – whose job it was 'to see that no native, be he humble coolie or high-born rajah, sets foot ever upon that hallowed place'.[35] By all accounts the sentry executed his duty with enthusiasm, boasting to British visitors of how he had had ejected Indian intruders on a number of occasions. Accounts spanning the rest of the century speak to an extreme and persistent colonial sensitivity regarding the prospect of Indians infiltrating the park and desecrating the space with their presence.[36]

Yet, despite the restrictive permit system, zealous groundskeepers and the overall colonial paranoia about Indian engagements with the site, a regular feature of popular commercial photographs of the memorial gardens is the *presence* of Indian figures. Picturesque aesthetics therefore had a marked effect on the movement of Indian bodies across a stratified social environment. In one photograph of the park taken by Samuel Bourne (c. 1865), an Indian man peers over a fenced enclosure of decorative trees and bushes, only to see two more Indian men convening in close proximity to the shrine.[37] British visitors whose own engagements with the site had been defined

by Indian absence would have formed a significant part of the customer base for such a seemingly incongruous commemorative imagery. Indeed, the Prussian-born photographer John Saché started explicitly targeting the Cawnpore tourist market with such scenes from the mid-1870s onward, when he set up a seasonal studio there (Figure 5.5). Considering that numerous colonial accounts make a point of noting the racial regulations of the park with approval, it would be surprising if the disjunction between the ethics of exclusion and the aesthetics of *staffage* had not registered for at least some viewers.

Still, it is by no means certain that the Indian figures' presence at the site would have jarred for these colonials upon viewing the photographs. Unlike Beato's grim photograph of violence, the picturesque disposition does not grapple with historically new (for the camera) subject matter, crudely incorporating shocking scenes for which there was no obvious aesthetic model into the frame of perception established by the picturesque. Rather, the picturesque aesthetic is brought to bear here, fittingly, on a colonial park that was already sculpted according to picturesque principles: there is an aesthetic coherence to such photographs which means that, while the alien status of the Indian presence was fundamental to the regulations of the park, their presence as

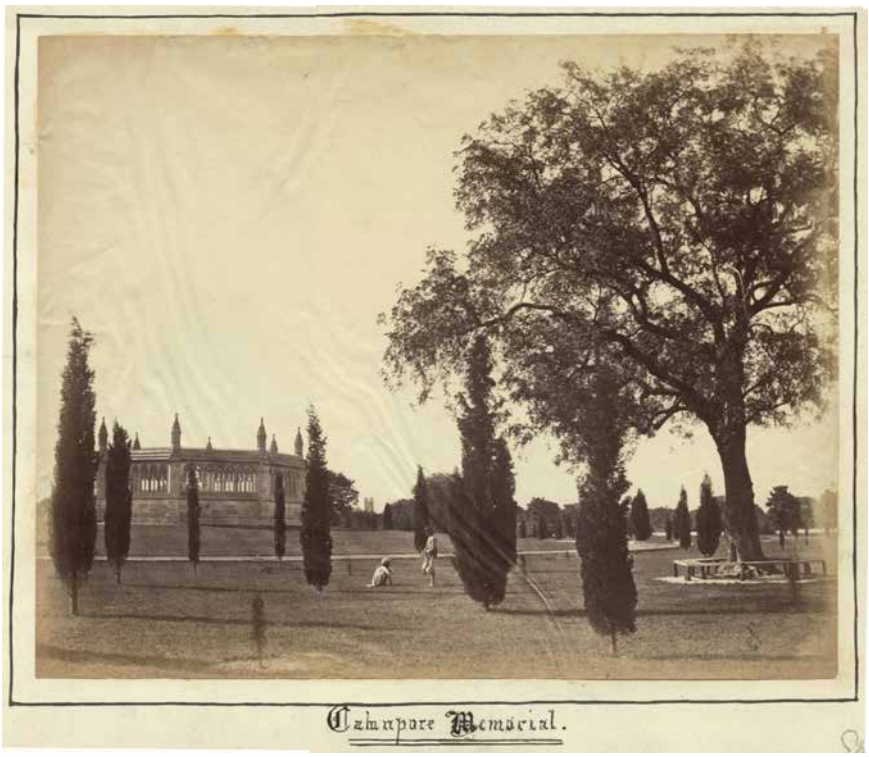

Figure 5.5 John Edward Saché, *The Memorial Well, Cawnpore*, c.1870, albumen silver print, 23 × 28.5 cm. © The British Library Board, Photo 2/3(80).

staffage is thoroughly naturalized in the tourist imagery. This is because the colonial picturesque tradition of which these photographs were a part was one that so routinely incorporated Indian figures into the landscape, positioned as objects for the aesthetic delectation of the colonial viewer.[38] As a pictorial motif seen by viewers, then, these figures are relatively straightforward, easily explained by reference to a wealth of contemporaneous images that drew on the established tropes of the landscape genre.

Yet what should we make of these figures' status as living men who had to pose in a racially policed park? It is impossible to know how much any awareness of European artistic traditions informed these men's understanding of the ritual they were participating in as they entered a space in which they were persona non grata (no Indian accounts of such events exist), but any awareness of picturesqueness cannot fully account for the psychology of such scenes. To be posed next to an emotive site of Anglo-Indian violence was to be incorporated into an imperial psychodrama of crime and punishment: a lust for indiscriminate revenge upon the Indian populace was a hallmark of the colonial imaginary during and even many years after the 1857 insurrection, particularly in Cawnpore. The series of massacres and counter-massacres that these sites recalled would surely not have been lost on the Indian figures who were made to stand in for the general figure of the 'native'. I have written elsewhere[39] of how posing on such sites worked to insinuate the potential vulnerability of the figures to what literature scholar Alex Tickell has described as 'the fearful misrecognitions of a militia-led colonial society [… which] involve the potential interchangeability of any Indian man with a "mutinous" racial Other who is potentially *beyond* the law as a racially-coded version of *bare life*'.[40] In this sense, the photographs were a raw exercise of imperial power, staging unsettling encounters between colonised bodies and incendiary sites of violence.

Yet there is also a sense in which the picturesque interventions can be seen less as an assertion of autonomous colonial agency and more as an index of an intractable aesthetic habit. As Tapati Guha-Thakurta has noted, for the colonial British in the nineteenth century, the picturesque aesthetic was a 'compulsion' of visual representation that had grown from 'a filter […] into a frame, inscribing itself into the body of the physical space and its structures', and it is this compulsive inscribing of the landscape with European tropes of the picturesque which is at work in the Cawnpore memorial and its attendant imagery.[41] Pictorial conventions are slavishly adhered to in spite of countervailing sensitivities regarding the presence of Indian people in this space. Such examples point to how much we are spoken by, rather than simply speak through, signifying systems. The picturesque was not harnessed uncomplicatedly to the demands of imperial power; it was something that shaped that power, even exerting pressure on it to act in way that ran counter to ethical sensitivities – its 'compulsions' of representation deployed without particular regard for the specificity of a situation or locale.

My claim here is not that the picturesque was inherently transgressive, but that the aestheticization of warfare and remembrance was unpredictable in its effects. Photography entered a culture that had already been primed by picturesque aesthetics to interact with the world as a picture. This was, as Chaudhary has argued, key to the management of the Victorian sensorium in the face of the ever-increasing visual

novelty, fragmentation and shock of modernity. A perceptual habitus helped to orient the Victorians, providing a visual framework in which to apprehend exotic and difficult stimuli; yet, these habits of vision and representation also compromised their ability to engage with people and places according to other logics: the ideal of racial exclusiveness that sacralized the Cawnpore park within the imperial imaginary; the humane sympathy which Ruskin aspired to in his rejection of the 'lower' picturesque; or the decent and seemly treatment of dead enemies. The aestheticization of such sensitive topics as suffering, death and remembrance was laced with ethical quandary; embedded within the aesthetic regulation of troubling scenes was the risk of a certain excess of picturesque enjoyment, a spectre of moral indifference or even sadism that rendered this modern coping-mechanism a potential disturbance.

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Notes

1 Christopher Pinney, *The Coming of Photography to India* (London: British Library, 2008), 126.
2 Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), 3.
3 John Ruskin, *Modern Painters* IV (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1856), 1.
4 Ibid., 9. My understanding of Ruskin's critique of the picturesque as marking 'the origin of a modern perceptualist culture' is indebted to John Macarthur, 'The Heartlessness of the Picturesque: Sympathy and Disgust in Ruskin's Aesthetics', *Assemblage* 32 (April 1997): 139.
5 Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760–1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 5.
6 Letter from Ruskin in Parma, Italy, to his father, dated 10 July 1845. Quoted in Robert Hewison, 'Ruskin and the Picturesque', from *John Ruskin: The Argument of the Eye* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), http://www.victorianweb.org/authors/ruskin/hewison/2.html, accessed 7 January 2019.
7 Zahid. R. Chaudhary, *Afterimage of Empire: Photography in Nineteenth-Century India* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 73–107.
8 Ibid., 116.
9 Henry A. Giroux, 'Disturbing Pleasures: Murderous Images and the Aesthetics of Depravity', *Third Text* 26, no. 3 (2012): 259–73.
10 Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London and Brooklyn: Verso, 2009), 25.
11 Giles Tillotson, *The Artificial Empire: The Indian Landscapes of William Hodges* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000).
12 Jeffrey Auerbach, 'The Picturesque and the Homogenization of Empire', *The British Art Journal* 5, no. 1 (2004): 283–305.
13 Both Chaudhary and Anne Lacoste locate Beato at the intersection of 'picturesque' and 'documentary' modes of practice. See Chaudhary, 80; and Anne Lacoste, *Felice Beato: A Photographer on the Eastern Road* (Getty Publications, 2010), 5.

14 Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, 10.
15 Chaudhary, *Afterimage of Empire,* 80.
16 Quoted in David Harris, *Of Battle and Beauty: Felice's Beato's Photographs of China* (Santa Barbara: London: University of California Press, 1999), 29
17 Chaudhary, *Afterimage of Empire*, 110.
18 Letter from Ruskin (in Parma, Italy), to his parents, July 1845.
19 Ibid.
20 Sontag's views on photography famously change from her 1977 essays in *On Photography* to her later meditation on images of suffering, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003). I speak mostly of her earlier views here, taking them as emblematic of a prominent strain of modern photographic theory that has been characterized by an extreme level of anxiety over the perceived ethical failings of photography. See Susie Linfield, *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence* (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 3–32.
21 Chaudhary, *Afterimage of Empire*, 80, 97.
22 See Susan Buck-Morss, 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered', *October* 62 (Autumn 1992): 3–41.
23 Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936) in Joanne Morra and Marquard Smith (eds), *Experiences in Visual Culture: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, IV (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 131.
24 Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, 9.
25 Macarthur, 'The Heartlessness of the Picturesque', 136.
26 Sir George Campbell (ed. Sir Charles E. Bernard), *Memoirs of My Indian Career*, II (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), 4. Emphasis added.
27 Ibid., 37.
28 Macarthur, 'The Heartlessness of the Picturesque', 139.
29 John Falconer, 'Willoughby Wallace Hooper: "A Craze about Photography"', *The Photographic Collector* 4 (Winter 1983): 258–85.
30 'No. 14, Letter from Viceroy Dufferin to Lord Randolph Churchill (extract)', 24 January 1886, *Telegraphic Correspondence relating to Military Executions and Dacoity in Burmah* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1886), 8.
31 Quoted in Chaudhary, *Afterimage of Empire*, 121.
32 Pinney, *The Coming of Photography to India*, 30.
33 Ibid.
34 There is no evidence of a permit ever being issued.
35 Gertrude Bacon, 'Echoes of the Great Rebellion', *The Ludgate* 7 (1899): 362.
36 I have dealt with the visual politics of the Cawnpore memorial at length elsewhere. See Sean Willcock, 'Aesthetic Bodies: Posing on Sites of Violence in India, 1857–1900', *History of Photography* 39, no. 2 (May 2015): 142–59.
37 Samuel Bourne, *Outside of the Well* (c. 1860). Albumen silver print. The British Library Board, Photo 394/(60).
38 See Gary D. Sampson, 'Unmasking the Colonial Picturesque: Samuel Bourne's Photographs of Barrackpore Park', in Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson (eds), *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge 2004), 84–106 and Romita Ray, *Under the Banyan Tree: Relocating the Picturesque in British India* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013).
39 See Willcock, 'Aesthetic Bodies'.

40 Alex Tickell, *Terrorism, Insurgency and Indian-English Literature, 1830–1947* (New Haven and Oxon: Routledge, 2012), 92.

41 Tapati Guha-Thakurta, 'The Compulsions of Visual Representation in Colonial India', in Maria Antonella Pelizzari (ed.), *Traces of India: Photography, Architecture, and the Politics of Representation, 1850–1900* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture & New Haven: Yale Center for British Art, 2003), 116.

6

Sun-struck: Elizabeth Rigby (Eastlake) and the Sun's 'Earnest Gaze' in Calotypes by Hill and Adamson

Lindsay Smith

Lady Elizabeth Eastlake's (1809–93) now canonical essay 'Photography', published in the *Quarterly Review* in 1857, is generally read as a summation of her views on the relationship of photography to art.[1] Recalling the capacity of 'a few heads of elderly gentlemen' made by the 'new and mysterious art' of photography to 'revive' the 'spirit' of the seventeenth-century Dutch master of portraiture, Rembrandt, Eastlake invokes the sun as their creator, in the familiar epithet, 'the solar pencil'.[2] The answer to her subsequent question of 'how far the sun may be considered an artist' is in the negative.[3] In Eastlake's aesthetic judgement, following rapid commercialization and the advent of collodion during the 1850s, photography ultimately falls short of art. Yet, a more nuanced response haunts the essay in Eastlake's memory of, and continuing attachment to, the calotype process that, as Elizabeth Rigby, she had encountered in Edinburgh in the 1840s. Although she does not name them, those 'heads' with which she opens 'Photography' – 'executed in a bistre-like colour upon paper' and 'little more than patches of broad light and shade'[4] – are calotypes by the Scottish pioneers David Octavius Hill (1802–70) and Robert Adamson (1821–48).

Eastlake's association with Hill and Adamson is well established, and scholars have discussed the representation of solar agency in her 1857 essay.[5] But the roots of Eastlake's anthropomorphizing of the sun as proto-artist are established in the 1840s in her encounter with, and writing on, the calotype. And we neglect a formative stage in her thinking if we fail to address Eastlake's earlier responses to the paper process as they dovetail with her experience of sitting for the Edinburgh photographers. As collodion supplants calotypy, her views on photography evolve, but Eastlake continues to associate calotypes with 'art' in ways distinct to the process and to the material circumstances of sitting outside for Hill and Adamson in the warmth of bright sunlight.

Sunburn

I begin with a calotype from that period in which strong sunlight bleaches the face and dissolves the centre parting of a young woman (Figure 6.1). She leans forward from a chair to peer out from the paper support upon which she is captured. Loops of plaited hair around her ears assume the forms of polished beads, such is the strength of light directly hitting them. Below her clasped hands the woman's patterned gown is lost entirely in whiteness; the toe of her right shoe pokes out from under its hem. Etched by deep shadows, her facial features too underscore the power of solar rays arrested on light-sensitized paper.[6] The earnest look in the darkly defined eyes and the woman's expressive mouth resist the fate of disappearance of other parts of the image. Beside the sitter, meanwhile, on a small carved table, a book takes the weight of, and is partially obscured by, the muddled folds of a heavy curtain. These self-conscious props, precursors of those later to be mocked in Walter Benjamin's description of commercial studios, contrive to create a domestic space in what is clearly an outdoor setting.[7] But this calotype by Hill and Adamson, taken between 1843 and 1847, belongs to the decade – preceding industrialization of the medium – which for Benjamin was characterized by 'the considerable period of the exposure' whose 'technical equivalent' he identifies 'in the absolute continuum from brightest light to darkest shadow'.[8] Benjamin locates in portraits by the Edinburgh pioneers 'something new and strange': a quality inciting a beholder to search for a 'spark of contingency, of the Here and Now' by which a photograph resists 'absor[ption] into *art*'.[9] In the case of Benjamin's much-cited example of the calotype of Elizabeth Johnstone Hall, photographic contingency prompts a desire 'to know' the 'name' of a sitter 'who, even now is still real'.[10]

The 'name' of the person here pictured in glaring sunshine is Matilda Rigby (1815–90), the younger sister of Elizabeth Rigby.[11] Born and raised in Norfolk, the sisters had moved to Edinburgh in 1842 with their widowed mother Anne, née Palgrave and their elder sister, Jane (born 1806).[12] Hill and Adamson took the calotype in the suntrap of the walled garden at Rock House, at the foot of Calton Hill, that functioned as a studio. An established painter and lithographer, Hill's interest in the new medium of photography coincided with challenges he faced while working on a large-scale group portrait of the first general synod of the Church of Scotland.[13] Adamson, by contrast, was proficient in the calotype process, having learnt it from his brother Professor John Adamson who had been taught the process by Sir David Brewster. Robert Adamson had moved to Edinburgh from St Andrews on 10 May 1843, leasing Rock House to set up his photographic studio.[14] He entered a partnership with Hill before July of that year, with himself as hands-on photographer and Hill in a role he claimed was 'purely that of an artist'.[15] The pair subsequently produced several thousand calotypes assisted by Janet (Jessie) Mann (1805–67) until Adamson's premature death in 1848.

Elizabeth Rigby, already an established travel writer, translator and reviewer when she moved to Edinburgh, was one of Hill and Adamson's most frequently photographed sitters in the period between 1843 and 1847.[16] Matilda Rigby appears in far fewer prints. Nonetheless, the younger sister has been mistaken for the elder in this striking portrait (see Figure 6.1). The mistake is somewhat surprising when we consider the different ways in which Hill and Adamson posed the siblings; Matilda confronts the

Figure 6.1 David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, *Mrs Matilda (Rigby) Smith*, 1843–7, salted paper print from a paper negative, 21.3 × 16 cm. National Galleries of Scotland, purchased from the estate of Sophia Finlay (Charles Finlay's Trust) 1937, PGP HA 3102. Reproduced with the permission of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

sun directly, while Elizabeth looks down in several of the calotypes that the Edinburgh pair took of her. We find the latter sitting, for example, with eyes lowered, her elbow anchored upon two books, her head resting against her hand (Figure 6.2). Linda Wolk

Figure 6.2 David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, *Lady Elizabeth (Rigby) Eastlake*, 1843–7, salted paper print from a paper negative, 20.6 × 15.3 cm. National Galleries of Scotland, Elliot Collection, bequeathed 1950, PGP HA 2839. Reproduced with the permission of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

has suggested that differences in pose and props in Hill and Adamson's portraits of the sisters represent Elizabeth as projecting an 'independent-minded' and 'scholarly'[17] persona and Matilda as 'somewhat sociable and coy'.[18] Wolk reads Elizabeth's identity as connoisseur and art critic in the inclusion of a second book and a vase of flowers

in this portrait of her. She notes, by contrast, that Matilda's single book 'is clearly not a symbolic attribute';[19] the younger Rigby is not credited with commanding the same seriousness as her sister as photographic subject.

I dwell upon these portraits to shift emphasis from potential iconographic continuities between calotype and portrait painting to focus instead upon what the sitters' responses to sunlight might yield in the context of Elizabeth Rigby's writing on the relationship of photography to art. As noted, the sun plays a prominent visible role in the calotype of Matilda Rigby; indeed, the sitter appears caught in perpetual danger of sunburn. But solar agency – that which, as Lady Eastlake, Elizabeth Rigby will figure as the moods and whims of the sun – also makes its presence felt, albeit differently, in Hill and Adamson's portrait of her. In fact, in 1843, she comments upon the reason for averting her gaze when sitting for their camera. But Rigby does not offer the type of 'artistic' explanation we have been led to expect. In a letter to her London publisher John Murray dated October 7, referring to 'a few specimens' of calotype portraits, including 'three of herself' enclosed with her letter, she adds: 'The downcast eyes were a necessary consequence of the most brilliant sun which prevented their being raised the least higher.'[20] She looked down, she explains, because the sun was in her eyes. We should not discount this commonplace explanation for Rigby's lowered gaze in this and other portraits of her by Hill and Adamson. Indeed, I want to take her at her word.

Rigby's 1843 letter to Murray is additionally significant because it details her early encounter with 'the instrument called the Calotype' specifically as employed by Hill and Adamson; just a few months into their partnership she, and most likely Matilda, had already sat for portraits. Acknowledging that her recipient, Murray, will 'appreciate' those calotypes she has sent him for 'their truth and beauty' (although, she notes, 'few do'), Rigby proceeds to connect the photographic process with the work of Rembrandt. 'With old faces', she claims, the calotype 'is most successful – producing the most exquisite Rembrandt effect, but I have none of that kind to send you'.[21] This comparison, to which Rigby variously returns, inaugurates a connection that is perhaps unremarkable given the reverence with which Rembrandt's works – especially his etchings – were held in Britain at the time. But, for Rigby to equate in 1843 calotypes with manual productions by the Dutch master testifies to her early confidence in Hill and Adamson's work. In this same letter to Murray, while discounting photography as rival to an artist's work – 'it was absurd to think that any would supersede him' – she deems the calotype 'the only line of photographic drawing which can at all assist an artist',[22] discounting by implication the direct positive process of the daguerreotype, its chief competitor at the time.

Sunbeam

In his anonymous 'Photogenic Drawing' of January 1843, Sir David Brewster identifies in examples of John and Robert Adamson's calotypes 'all the force and beauty of the sketches of Rembrandt'.[23] Two years later, in 1845, in a letter to the painter David Roberts, Hill deems his calotype portrait of the Marquis of Northampton as 'singularly Rembrandtish',[24] while, the following year, *The Athenaeum* equates Talbot's calotypes published in *The Pencil of Nature* with 'the broad and massive studies of Rembrandt'.[25] While the analogy demonstrates the long-established and continuing market for copies

and imitations of Rembrandt's works,[26] as a shorthand for incomparable representation of light, it also comes to signal particular qualities of light in Hill and Adamson's calotypes.

Between her letter to Murray of 1843 and her essay 'Photography' of 1857, Elizabeth Rigby refines her initial comment on the calotype's 'Rembrandt effect' in a review of German painting in which she also strengthens what will become her enduring attachment to Hill and Adamson's work. But it is easy to miss the significance of photography in Rigby's damning critique of the Düsseldorf School of art published anonymously in *The Quarterly Review* in March 1846.[27] Motivated by a wish to determine 'whether German artists be really so much in advance of us as supposed?',[28] Rigby denounces a preference for 'trick' over 'truth', employing the example of the calotype to compare 'version[s] of Nature'[29] in British and German painting and to demonstrate the superior veracity of the former:

> We, in short, give our version of Nature – they give theirs: which is right? One standard, however, there does exist, and one from which there is no appeal, for it rests upon demonstration, and not upon opinion. This is to be found in that wonderful source recently discovered – the only sure test for those artists who, professing to reflect Nature in their works, can by Nature herself only be judged. We mean the beautiful and wonderful Calotype drawings – so precious in every real artist's sight, not only for their own matchless truth of Nature, but as the triumphant proof of all to be most revered as truth in art. Every painter, high and low, to whom Nature has ever revealed herself, here finds his justification. Let Mr. Hill apply the Calotype instrument to a simple Manly head in a commanding position, it creates a Sir Joshua – give it an old face wrinkled with age, it returns us a Rembrandt – summon three or four bare-legged urchins, we see Murillo's beggar boys – place it before a group of Newhaven fishermen, we have Teniers' Dutch Boors, or Ostade's Village Alehouse –or against a crumbling brick wall, and Peter de Hooghe lies mezzotinted before us. Take it to tangled sylvan landscapes, it presents us with a Hobbima, a Gainsborough, or even, what we had not sufficiently prized before, a Constable – give it fretted spires and leafy banks, distant towns and glittering streams, playful shadows and struggling lights, sunny storms and watery beams – and give it, lastly, the very motes dancing in the air before them all – and the detractors of Turner lick the dust – the loftiest eulogy of Mr. Ruskin is justified. Every truth that art and genius has yet succeeded in seizing here finds its prototype; but what shall we conjure up in heaven or earth, or in the waters below the earth, that shall produce a Düsseldorf picture? Nature disowns it.[30]

In a passage privileging the capacity of 'Calotype drawings' to resemble and thus legitimate various styles of painting, Rigby marshals Rembrandt along with Reynolds as portraitists, Dutch and Spanish genre painters, landscape painters Hobbema, Gainsborough, Constable and, most contemporaneously, Turner, as artists 'revered'

for their 'truth' of representation. The Düsseldorf school, however, she claims, can only fail when assessed by the same 'photographic' measure. Present to 'Mr. Hill['s] calotype instrument', a scene, a person or an object, Rigby explains, and the sun will produce a prototype by which to 'test' those artworks claiming 'to reflect Nature'. Repeating the invitation to calotype any number of 'picturesque' scenes in return for an original of 'Nature herself', Rigby ends her sentence in brilliant effects of light. 'Glittering streams, playful shadows, sunny storms and watery beams' lead to evanescent but dynamic specks revealed in strong sunlight.[31] Indeed, the very 'dust' that she invites 'detractors of Turner' to 'lick' is revealed as 'dancing motes' in sunbeams.[32] But Rigby's footnote championing Hill and Adamson as bringing calotype 'drawings to their present picturesque perfection' begs the question of medium and whether the sun is 'drawing', 'painting' or 'engraving'.[33] Since, in the same context, Rigby equates the calotype with the mezzotint, her 'sun' artist appears to be equally adept with pencil, brush and burin.

Sun picture

Eleven years later in 'Photography', when as Lady Eastlake, she conjures Rembrandt to preface her account of the medium as 'a house-hold word and a household want',[34] she returns readers of the *Quarterly Review* to calotypes by Hill and Adamson. But reflecting in 1857 upon the capacity of the sun 'both to discern and to execute' works previously comparable with those by the Dutch master, she declares that 'the likeness to Rembrandt and Reynolds is gone!'[35] Lamenting what has been eclipsed in practice, if not lost to the memory, she attributes such a decline in 'artistic' connection to technological and chemical developments – especially Frederick Scott Archer's wet collodion process – that lend indiscriminate clarity to the photograph. Since 'what was at first only suggestion is now all careful making out',[36] the capacity of the calotype to capture the mystery of light in Rembrandt's works has been sacrificed for a capacity to see too much.

Between her 'Review of German Art' and her essay 'Photography', Eastlake had gained considerable knowledge of the photographic medium. In the later essay, she voices her critique of social and artistic implications of new processes as a compromise to the agency of the sun, thereby contributing to a larger nineteenth-century discourse anthropomorphizing early photography as the sun's relative willingness to perform; he is generous or else miserly with his rays. But Eastlake's contribution is distinctive. While she maintains that with advances in photography the sun is a reformed 'sluggard' and liberated from the 'drudge[ry]' of Niépce's heliograph, Eastlake bemoans advances in chemistry that force the sun to work too fast.[37] She laments the rapidity of collodion that requires but the 'wink' of the sun's eye, preferring instead 'a few earnest minutes' of the 'his gaze' to generate calotypes.[38] Extending her scepticism to landscape photography, Eastlake maintains that the faster process, disregarding the 'whole' of a composition as prioritized by 'art', 'seems embarrassed with the treatment of several gradations of distance'.[39] Speed of collodion means that 'the finish of background and middle distance' of a photograph 'seems not to be commensurate with that of the foreground',[40] thereby compromising 'truth to nature' as John Ruskin had articulated it.

Consistent with Ruskin's conception of Turnerian mystery the seeds of Eastlake's comments emerge in an earlier response she records in her journal for 15 February 1845 after seeing Turner's *Palestrina–Composition* (1828) exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy's Annual Exhibition:

> It is like exhibiting a little bit of reality among ranks full of imitation; it is a room full of paintings, and a small open space among them, through which you behold the most airy, limpid, cool landscape, with distance interminable. He does what all would wish to do – preserves the spirit and spirituality of the sketch in the finished picture.[41]

Turner's 'distance interminable' in 'a small open space' of 'reality', as Rigby describes it, anticipates the 'small' sun-generated 'space' of the calotype that the following year, in her 1846 essay, she will liken to Turner's representation of light. But Rigby's reference to Turner's capture of 'the spirit of the sketch' also resonates with her praise for the superior qualities of the calotype as a 'paper process'. In this regard, she shares Hill's frequently cited comment from 1848 on the role played by the paper in arresting a fitting quality of manual imperfection: 'The rough surface, and unequal texture throughout the paper is the main cause of the Calotype fading in the details, before the process of Daguerreotypy – and this is the very life of it.'[42] Eastlake's continuing affection in the 1850s for the capacity of salted paper prints to capture suggestion over indiscriminate clarity owes much to qualities of the paper. When she grants to the calotype a propensity to conjure the 'spirit' of artists, Rembrandt prominent among them, she is responding to the embedding of the image in fibres of the paper, along with the lower resolution of a salted paper print which generated less detail, especially in dark areas of the print.[43]

Sunshade

I want to return to Matilda Rigby. We find her still in the garden at Rock House, positioned more upright in the chair, in another portrait by Hill and Adamson from the same sitting (Figure 6.3). Arguably, she appears less Rembrandtesque. Light does not bleach out her face in this print, nor whiten the colours of her dress. Everything in the frame looks much the same. But, upon closer inspection, a discarded necessity rather than a fashionable prop has made its way in. To the right of the subject's feet, a parasol has been lightly closed and propped up. Perhaps the sitter has declined it and chosen to face Phoebus head on, or lowered it prior to the take. Whatever the case, sunlight nevertheless registers its presence by a sunshade that has been employed off camera.[44] Taken together, the two portraits of Matilda Rigby (Figures 6.1 and 6.3), and that of her illustrious sister (Figure 6.2), manifest in different ways the direct heat and light of the sun. Moreover, they differently inscribe light's signature as creator of images that problematize categories of art and artist by underscoring the ontological status of a photograph as both solar imprint, or 'stain' as Eastlake also refers to it, and picture. But viewing these portraits is also to return to Eastlake's figuration of calotypy

Figure 6.3 David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, *Mrs Matilda (Rigby) Smith*, 1843–7, salted paper print from a paper negative, 20.8 × 15.2 cm. National Galleries of Scotland, given by Miss Janet Notman, PGP HA 405. Reproduced with the permission of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

in temporal terms – 'allow[ing] the photograph to take its time' and 'concentrate its efforts upon one thing only'[45] – that conveys her experience of having sat for, as well as having observed, the calotype process.

I come full circle to Benjamin and his account of duration in which a sitter appears to have grown into a calotype requiring a long exposure outdoors that 'caused the subject to focus his life in the moment rather than hurrying past it'.[46] For Benjamin a move to indoor commercial portrait studios of the 1850s diminishes such a quality of duration. For Eastlake, a shift to indoor studios, and the forfeit of time spent by a sitter of the 1840s in direct sunlight, is also in no small part responsible for a loss of connection with art as exemplified by Rembrandt. Such a shift from outside to inside was brought home to me by a stray pebble caught in the left foreground of the calotypes of Matilda Rigby. It is a tiny aberrant detail and one the photographer might easily have kicked out of the range of his lens. Yet, the resilience of that innocuous pebble touched by the direct warmth of the sun anchors the 'here and now' of the image as outdoors. At the same time, inviting a viewer to try to gauge forensically the time lapse between the negatives in which the sitter appears with, and without, sunshade, the pebble also gestures towards the slightest of objects to which, Eastlake will claim, in 1857, photography 'grant[s] a strength of identity which art does not even seek'.[47]

Eastlake's enduring preference for calotypy over subsequent processes owes much to its association with light as differently represented by Rembrandt as old Master and Turner as modern painter. But, in less tangible ways, that association also attaches to direct experience of long periods of sitting in the sun at Rock House. I end with a telling record of that experience in a letter from her friend Marion Smith to John Murray, 22 June 1847. Smith writes: 'I have been *calotyping* all day, seven different positions have been taken of myself and I do not know how many of Elizth Rigby. I think all successful but it has occupied the whole day & quite worn me out.'[48] Present with Rigby as sitter at Calton Hill, Smith conflates herself as passive object of the lens with the active role of photographer. In a striking transfer of agency, Smith's appropriation of the verb 'calotyping' voices, in terms of the sitter's physical role in the process, the demands of sitting in strong mid-summer light. Eastlake's first-hand knowledge of Hill and Adamson's practice was a seminal influence on her wider understanding of the medium. Harbouring the potential to approximate art in ways later ceded, the paper process encapsulated for Eastlake a quality of duration, in the exposure to the heat and the light of the sun, she had experienced at Rock House.

Notes

1 Elizabeth Eastlake, 'Photography', *The Quarterly Review* 101, no. 202 (April 1857): 442–68, reprinted in Alan Trachtenberg, ed. *Classic Essays on Photography* (New Haven, CT: Leete's Island Books, 1980), 40–68.
2 Ibid., 40.
3 Ibid., 43.
4 Ibid., 40.
5 On the sun as 'pictorial agent', see Joel Snyder, 'Res Ipsa Loquitur', in Lorraine Daston (ed.), *Things That Talk, Object Lessons from Art and Science* (New York: Zone Books,

2004), 195–221; see also Steve Edwards, *The Making of English Photography: Allegories* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 160–3.

6 Heinrich Schwarz notes Hill and Adamson's practice of taking calotypes 'when the sun was high', allowing 'the light to fall on [their] models at a sharp angle', *David Octavius Hill, Master of Photography*, trans. Helene E. Fraenkel (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1932), 40. Schwarz cites in this context Robert Hunt's explanation in *A Manual of Photography* (1854) of how, when lit 'vertically', 'a dark and unnatural shade is thrown under the eyes' of a sitter (40, n. 21).

7 Walter Benjamin, 'A Small History of Photography', in *One Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: Verso, 1985), 247.

8 Ibid.

9 Ibid., 243.

10 On Benjamin's response to this portrait, see for example: Sara Stevenson, *The Personal Art of David Octavius Hill* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 2–4.

11 Matilda Rigby married James Smith. Her son Charles Eastlake Smith (1851–1917) edited the *Journals and Correspondence* of his aunt Elizabeth who married Charles Lock Eastlake in 1849. Six loose salted paper prints of this portrait in the Collection of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery show tonal differences and cropping. Figure 6.1, PGPHA 3102 is the most bleached and uncropped. Two additional prints are collected in Albums 3 and 4 by James Drummond who dates the calotypes in Album 4 to 1843–4.

12 Elizabeth Rigby, aged thirty-two when she moved to Edinburgh, appears in two portraits with Matilda and Jane and in another with 'unknown woman', who I believe to be her sister Jane.

13 Stevenson, *The Personal Art*, 13–19, and Anne M. Lyden, *A Perfect Chemistry*: *Photographs by Hill & Adamson* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2017), 15–25.

14 Stevenson, *The Personal Art*, 13.

15 Cited in Sara Stevenson and John Ward, *Printed Light, the Scientific Art of William Henry Fox Talbot and David Octavius Hill with Robert Adamson* (Edinburgh: Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1986), 33.

16 Many additional salted paper prints of Elizabeth Rigby focus upon dress; she poses, for example, as a nun, in shawls, veiled, with back to the camera. See Sara Stevenson, *David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson: Catalogue of Their Calotypes Taken between 1843 and 1847 in the Collection of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1981).

17 Linda Wolk, 'Calotype Portraits of Elizabeth Rigby by David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson', *History of Photography* 7, no. 2 (July–September 1983): 167–81, 174.

18 Ibid., 170.

19 Ibid.

20 Julie Sheldon, *The Letters of Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 84. Two of the eleven prints of this calotype in the SNPG have arched tops.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.

23 'Photogenic Drawing or Drawing by the Agency of Light', *The Edinburgh Review* 76 (January 1843): 309–44, 327.

24 Letter dated 25 February 1845, cited in Stevenson and Ward 1986, 36.

25 *The Athenaeum* 985 (12 September 1846): 939.
26 Christian Tico Seifert, 'Rembrandt's Fame in Britain 1630–1900' in Christian Tico Seifert; with Peter Black, Stephanie S. Dickey, Patrick Elliott, Donatos Esposito, M.J. Ripps and Jonathan Yarker, *Rembrandt, Britain's Discovery of the Master* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2018), 11–51.
27 Elizabeth Rigby, Review of *Histoire de l'Art Moderne en Allemagne. Par le Comte A Raczynsk*i. Berlin, 2 vols 1841 and of *Die Düsseldorfer Mahler Schule. Von J. J. Scotti, Düsseldorf*, 1842, in *The Quarterly Review* 77 (March 1846): 323–48. For a discussion of this review see Stevenson, *A Personal Art*, 36.
28 Ibid., 328.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid., 337–8.
31 Ibid., 338.
32 Rigby's positive reference to Ruskin precedes the annulment of his marriage in 1854 and her support for Effie Gray, after which she would savage the first three volumes of *Modern Painters* in *The Quarterly Review* 98 (March 1856), 384–443.
33 On Rigby's own drawings, see Susanna Avery-Quash and Julie Sheldon, '"The Pencil Is the Child of My Heart": A Re-Discovered Album of Drawings by Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake', *The British Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (Autumn 2013): 45–64.
34 Eastlake, 'Photography', 40.
35 Ibid., 60.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid., 52.
39 Ibid., 63.
40 Ibid., 63–4.
41 *Journals, and Correspondence of Lady Eastlake*, ed. Charles Eastlake Smith (London: John Murray, 1895), 2 vols, I, 158.
42 Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography* (New York: MOMA, 1964), 37; Stevenson and Ward, *Printed Light*, 50.
43 Hill and Adamson liked to use Whatman Turkey Mill paper, also used by Talbot. See Roundtable One in Wilson Centre for Photography, *Salt & Silver, Early Photography 1840–1860, from the Wilson Centre for Photography* (London: Tate, 2015), 27–45.
44 Hill and Adamson photographed Elizabeth Rigby holding a parasol. Negative (HA 2824) in CSNPG shows her seated. In a frequently reproduced print, she stands in striped dress with her mother, a parasol just detectable over her shoulder.
45 Eastlake, 'Photography', 64.
46 Benjamin, 'Small History', 245.
47 Eastlake, 'Photography', 65.
48 Sheldon, *Letters*, 113, note 2. Marion Smith married John Murray on 6 July 1847; her brother James married Matilda Rigby on 11 October of that year.

7

‘Carlyle Like a Rough Block of Michael Angelo’s’: Thinking Photography through Sculpture in Julia Margaret Cameron’s Portraits

Patrizia Di Bello

In 1867, Julia Margaret Cameron (1815–79) sent to John Herschel (1792–1871) a ‘completed’ version of the album she had first made for him in 1864. The new photographs, taken with a camera she had just purchased, include one of the scientist himself, ‘Sir John Herschel with Cap’, the writer ‘Carlyle like a rough block of Michael Angelo’s sculpture’ (Figure 7.1), and the poet ‘Alfred Tennyson’ (1809–92) – all titles inscribed in the album’s contents page by Cameron herself.[1] Together with the painter G. F. Watts (1817–1904), already represented in the 1864 version of the album, these are some of the men Cameron passionately befriended as mentors and sources of inspiration,[2] and who played a crucial role in the development of her thinking about photographic aesthetics that this chapter analyses.

The new camera was larger than her first – fifteen by twelve inch plates instead of eleven by nine – and equipped with a Rapid Rectilinear lens which was especially designed to improve depth of field.[3] This is the capacity to image sharply details on more than one plane away from the camera, such as nose, lips and eyes while taking portraits. Cameron used this camera to make extraordinary life-size, close-up portraits of celebrated men and women of her time, almost as out of focus and blurred as the ones she had taken with her first camera. Banking on their success on a market avid for portraits of celebrities that should have been ripe for an alternative to the sharp, detailed, often stilted portraits taken by most carte-de-visite studios, Cameron copyrighted her large ‘heads’, sold prints through her London dealer and included them in a number of exhibitions.[4] The photographs did not make her fortune, as she had hoped, but did improve the critical reception of her work, which had been poor in the photographic press. Her male portraits, in particular, were met with approval: ‘The rugged masculine looks of these perfect pictures, the powerful and yet venerable air of the heads, are beyond praise.’[5] Carlyle himself was ambivalent about his photograph: ‘It is as if suddenly the picture began to speak, terrifically ugly and woe-begone, but has something of a likeness.’[6] This portrait was later reissued as a carte-de-visite,[7]

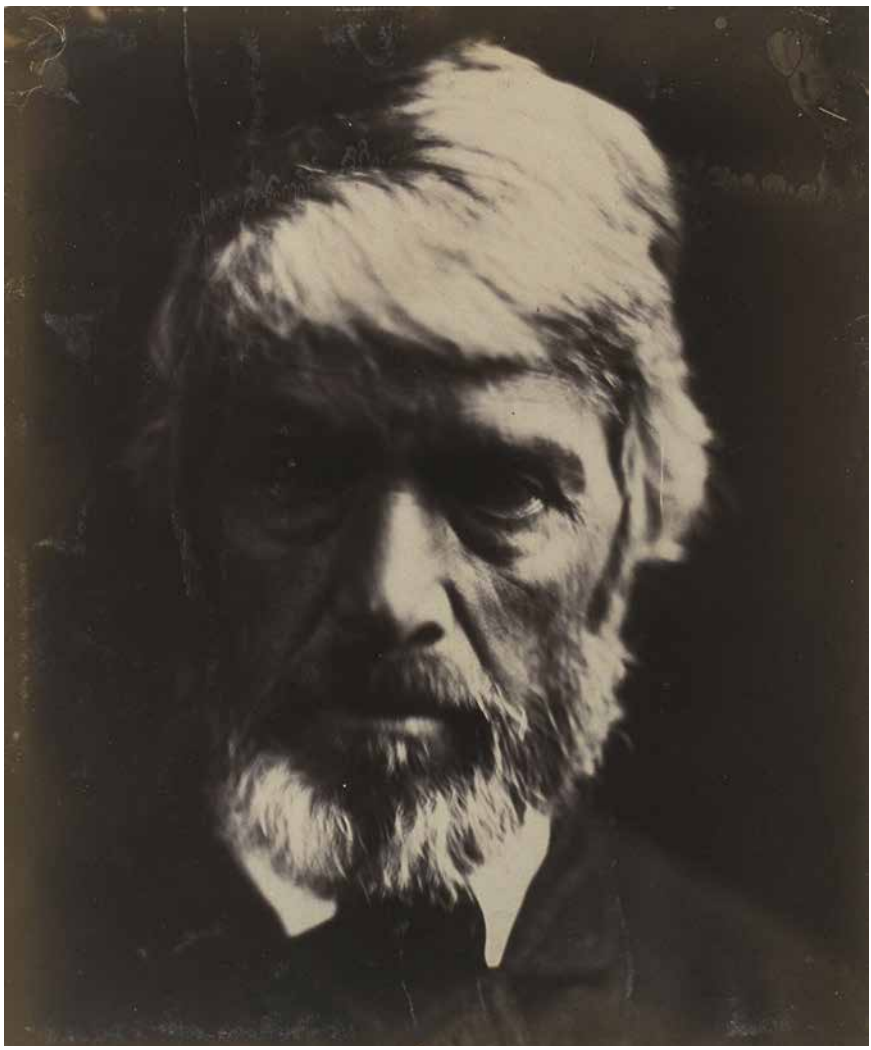

Figure 7.1 Julia Margaret Cameron, '*Carlyle Like a Rough Block of Michael Angelo's Sculpture*', 1867, albumen silver print from a wet collodion negative, 33.5 × 28 cm, 10311239.

was among carbon prints produced in 1875 by the London Autotype Company[8] and featured in Alfred Stieglitz's magazine *Camera Work*.[9]

Carlyle's portrait has since been much written about. Curator Colin Ford, who was instrumental in keeping the Herschel album in Britain when it came up for sale in 1974, describes it as 'one of Mrs Cameron's greatest works, one of the most powerfully intense photographic portraits ever taken'.[10] Art historian Robin Kelsey talks of her portraiture as 'highly unusual in foregrounding the performative exchange behind the image' and discusses her life-size portraits as 'representing her subjects in a sculpting chiaroscuro', harnessing the glitches of the photographic process to make 'imperfection a sign of achievement, and chance a sign of ambition'.[11] For photography scholar Mirjam Brusius, in Carlyle's portrait 'Cameron succeeded in rendering his vulnerability in addition to his strength and obstinacy. Imprecision permits ambiguity and makes visible Carlyle's complex and contradictory character.' Cameron, she argues, recasts the tension between the idea and the hand in Michelangelo's work as one between the idea and the machine.[12] My aim in this essay is to attend to the ramifications of Cameron's reference to sculpture at the time, to nuance some of these assessments with a richer understanding of what her comparison with Michelangelo – and sculpture more generally – might say about Cameron's photographic thought and practice.

In the portrait, Carlyle's face emerges out of the smudged darkness of the print in a dynamic blur. Lined skin, and white beard and hair look like stratified rock formations, an effect created by the blur caused by Carlyle's failure to remain still during the exposure, suggesting geological rather than human ageing. The eye on the right, the brighter side of the picture, is palpably soft in both expression and focus. Peering from the darkness on the left, the other eye looks back at us with a more penetrating gaze, emphasized by the relatively sharp highlight in the dark pupil, and the seemingly raised eyebrow. Looking at the print, it is hard to decode exactly which shapes are created by Carlyle's features and expression; which by the lighting and focus set by Cameron; and which by the movement of the subject. The focus is not so much soft as failing to reach Carlyle's face, unwilling to meet and pin down in sharpness either the slightly judgemental eye on the left, or the more vulnerable, appealing eye on the right. It is difficult to decide if the recalcitrance to meet the picture plane pervading the print – or perhaps our experience of it, as our eyes try and fail to focus any detail securely – comes from Carlyle's diffidence towards the photographic process, his unwillingness to sit (still) for Cameron's camera, or from Cameron's unwillingness to reach further towards Carlyle by moving her lens out towards him to image sharply at least some of his features, having already placed the camera closer than would have been the case in more respectfully distanced portraits taken by commercial studios.[13] As a woman, she was already being somewhat transgressive by wielding her large camera in his face. In fact, Cameron had rejected another, sharper version of this photograph, created by printing it the 'right' way around – not reversing the negative as she did in all of the surviving versions of this portrait where the printing was done 'by my own hand', as she had specified in a note to Herschel.[14] We know that the negative is reversed because there are several sharper versions of it, including later carbon prints by the Autotype Company (Figure 7.2). In these, Carlyle's bad haircut and uneven shirt collar seem to indicate less Dishevelled Genius, one of Cameron's favoured effects, and more Badly

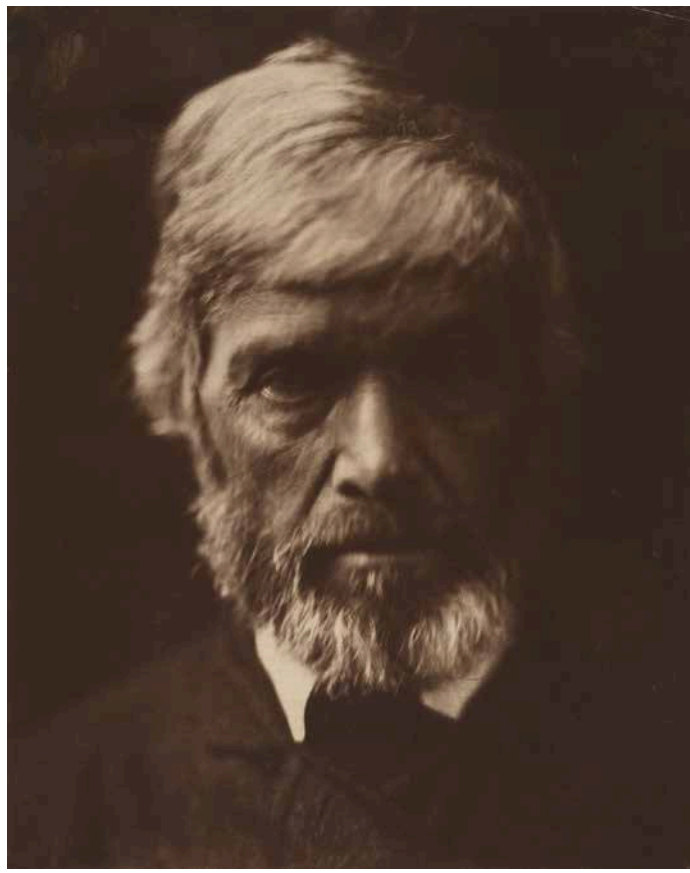

Figure 7.2 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Portrait of Thomas Carlyle*, 1867 (negative), carbon print, 1875, by The Autotype Company from a copy negative, 35.0 × 28.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949, 49.55.324. Creative Commons.

Looked-After Widower – his wife Jane had died the previous year. On the cheekbone, now on the left, the wrinkled skin is more obvious, distracting from our awareness of his eyes. By reversing the plate in her prints, so that the layer of collodion was not in direct contact with the paper but separated from it by the thickness of the glass, Cameron added an even layer of soft focus to the blur and shallow depth of field of her exposure. She also changed the movement of the image so that it reads, left to right (the Western mode of reading), as a journey from darkness into light, which, in the loss of details in the highlights, becomes abstracted into thought, vision and inspiration. The print, then, is an interpretation rather than a faithful copy of the negative, as the exposure is of Carlyle's face.

Cameron's label exploits to the full the affective, social and aesthetic connotations of the term 'rough', as well as the tactility of sculpture. Carlyle, who in 1867 was still grieving, was known to be temperamental and bad-mannered, 'very rude & quarrelsome […] a man who had not been brought up in the parlour'.[15] Cameron herself was indignant that Carlyle had initially refused to sit for her, even though she had already 'immortalised' some of the '*greatest* men of the age', protesting that it would be hell – 'a kind of *Inferno*'.[16] To photograph him, Cameron had to move her equipment, darkroom and all, which took a day to set up,[17] to Little Holland House,[18] where her sister Sarah Prinsep held one of London's leading artistic salons, helped by the presence of Watts who lived and had his painting studio there. Carlyle was a regular and might have been already sitting for Watts's 1868 portrait of him (Victoria and Albert Museum, London). Cameron took the photograph on a bad day, 'a midst of pouring rain & cloud' when lack of light would have given Cameron fewer choices about positioning her subject.[19] Cameron's label 'Carlyle like a rough block' attributes to him the roughness of hand-quarried stone, but also justifies it as an attribute of genius, as Michelangelo's own roughness with people and statues – he was supposed to have hit his *Moses* with the hammer in frustration at its silence even though it looked otherwise so alive – was often described in the many biographical accounts published in the nineteenth century.[20] At the same time, she is pointing out that it is *this* print, numbered '2' in the list Cameron added to the album, that has the power to portray this quality in him, a quality she herself had to experience to convince Carlyle to pose for her. Cameron is comparing her own photographic 'roughness' to Michelangelo's, meeting but not merging with that of Carlyle and the experience of photographing him, compounded by the rough weather. While many of Cameron's prints are labelled 'After the manner' of artists from the Renaissance, here Cameron is implying a correspondence of aims between her and Michelangelo that is deeper. Cameron might learn to compose from painters, but in Michelangelo's sculpture she finds a correspondence to her way of working. As she explained in 1867, writing to an unidentified art critic, 'Carlyle's Photograph is more like a block of marble out of Michael Angelo's hands than a work out of such a machine as the camera'.[21] In her hands, she suggests, photography can transcend the tension between idea and machine.

Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) would have been a loaded subject for any artist to portray. He was the one who had made the initial proposal in 1856 for the founding of the National Portrait Gallery. The popularity of his writings on the powers of 'authentic' portraits, to make history alive as a moral inspiration for the present, had played a role in Parliament's decision to invest in portraits made in the presence of the sitter, rather than commissioning copies.[22] This would have made the process of assembling a collection of worthy individuals faster and cheaper than waiting for original portraits to come on the market, but the extra expenditure was justified because only portraits made by a 'faithful human creature of that face and figure which he saw with his own eyes' would allow subsequent viewers to imaginatively stand in the place of the artist and encounter anew the heroes of the past in an educational experience.[23] This understanding of an authentic portrait as the result of an unmediated encounter between sitter and artist is also why photographs were not initially included in the Gallery's primary collection.

Sitting for a machine controlled by an operator – mechanical rather than artistic hands – did not count as a 'meeting between two subjectivities'.[24] Cameron's claim that her work is like Michelangelo's insists on the presence of her subjectivity, embedded in the results of her interactions with the photographic process.

Carlyle's writings had influenced Watts's own thinking about hero-worship, and the power of creative labour to embody in a portrait 'a summary of the life of a person, not the record of an accidental position' as he tried to do in his portrait of Carlyle.[25] If, as art historian Paul Barlow has shown, Watts's painting 'roughly, creating an agitated surface of brushstrokes, smudging and scraping' was how the painter had embedded the authenticity of his encounter with Carlyle in the portraits of him as an 'unresolved struggle',[26] Cameron before Watts embedded in her prints her own struggle with Carlyle and with her materials to record more than the 'accidental position' of her sitter. Her unwillingness to fix Carlyle's stance and (e)motions in front of the camera, visualized by her reticent or imprecise focus, was enhanced and materialized by her 'own hands' handling glass plates, papers and chemicals to make prints.

Michelangelo had a special resonance in Cameron's circles. Watts had labelled himself 'England's Michelangelo' after studying in Italy in the 1840s.[27] He was known to advise his pupils to copy from Michelangelo,[28] and Cameron's 'A Sibyl after the manner of Michelangelo' was part of their ongoing dialogue on composing pictures – a print is included in the album she gave Watts in 1864.[29] Tennyson's house at Freshwater, neighbouring Cameron's, was decorated with photographs of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel in Rome, and his Medici Tomb in Florence.[30] The latter site was one of the recommended highlights in Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Northern Italy* of 1856, when photographs of it were already available from Alinari, international supplier of photographs of Florentine art and architecture.[31] Michelangelo's popularity grew during the nineteenth century, but critical reception of his unfinished works was mixed. Their rough state could be understood as 'unintentional'[32] and run counter to academic notions that only fully finished work demonstrates an artist's full mastery, where 'finish' is also the final intervention on the surface of a work to make brushstrokes or chisel-marks less visible, thus suppressing the signs of artistic labour.[33] In the 1870s John Ruskin accused Michelangelo of 'bad workmanship […] hastily and incompletely done',[34] while Walter Pater asserted the superiority of his *non-finito*.[35] As early as 1833, the *Lives of Eminent Persons: Michael Angelo Buonaroti* [*sic*] – published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge when Cameron's husband Charles Hay was on the committee – described the figure of *Day* in the Medici Tomb as

> much unfinished – little more than blocked – yet most magnificent. To have done more would have diminished the noble effect of the whole, which is only heightened by what is left to the imagination. Perhaps none but a mind so gifted as that of this great master could have […] succeeded in so bold an attempt. Genius is creative […] the unfinished state in which many of his splendid works were left must have been occasioned by that impatience so often the concomitance of genius, which, having attained its grand object […] forsakes the details.[36]

Here, Michelangelo's work is unfinished not because of regrettable accidents of history – having to leave Florence – or bad workmanship, but because of an aesthetic decision. Impatience is not a defect of temper but the intelligence of genius, who understands that forsaking details improves the work. This understanding also helped to make sense of Michelangelo's statement, repeated by many biographers, that his vision for a work emerged in dialogue with the marble block he was working from. By revealing the marks left by Michelangelo's chisel, rough sections made visible the development of his vision in action. Cameron's claim to Michelangelo is asking us to understand blurred and out-of-focus prints as the actions of posing and focusing made visible, and optical or chemical glitches as the *non-finito* of photographic materials.

It is hard to say if Cameron had read these or similar evaluations of Michelangelo's *non-finito*, such as that in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's 1851 poem *Casa Guidi Windows*, where the unfinished bust of Brutus is powerful because it gives nineteenth-century Italians the need to imaginatively complete it with the features of a modern hero who would stand up to despots – as Brutus had to Caesar – to unify Italy.[37] It is easy, however, to imagine similar opinions being aired at Little Holland House, frequented by the Brownings, where 'England's Michelangelo' was beginning to practise sculpture.[38] Watts's later *Prometheus* was based on *Day*, whose unfinished face was thought to be Michelangelo's self-portrait.[39] Or to think of the merits of the *non-finito* being discussed at Freshwater, while looking at Tennyson's photographs of the Medici Tomb where *Day* was situated, or noting the South Kensington Museum's acquisition of a cast of *Brutus* in 1864.[40]

Discussions about degrees of finish were not confined to painting and sculpture. Elizabeth Eastlake's 1857 article on photography discusses at length the tension between technical and artistic control over the photographic image. More of the former might be desirable but would not result in the latter. For Eastlake, control over 'finish' as the degree and distribution of legible details across an image was central to 'the connection of photography with art'.[41] Artists working with their hands were able to exercise aesthetic judgement not only by arranging the elements of a composition, but also by signifying their importance by degrees of detailed rendition. This was crucial to convey the artist's unique understanding of the subject. Photography's lack of such control over details had been emphasized by the use of collodion, developed in the early 1850s, which was faster and sharper than the earlier calotypes, appreciated by Eastlake as 'Rembrandt-like studies'. Collodion portraits made visible every accidental detail, detracting attention from the face, resulting in images that worked as 'facial maps' but were not 'modelled and rounded with that truth and beauty which art attains'.[42] 'Correctness of drawing, truth of detail, and absence of conventions', for Eastlake the best characteristics of photography as a new form of communication, excluded it from the realm of 'that mystery called Art'.[43]

The aesthetic of the unfinished, championed by Romanticism because it left on the work the tactile traces of the artist's creative process, giving a more active role to the imagination of the sensitive viewer, was becoming widespread during the nineteenth century.[44] This was a problem for photographs because their forms emerged fully finished from camera and darkroom, and this overabundance of details was not proportional to

the photographer's skill or labour, as it was for painters and sculptors. Unlike painting, where every detail has been given conscious attention by the artist's eyes and hands, photography records everything, trivial or important, and the photographer cannot discriminate by finishing them differently. As Kelsey argues, photographers could eschew finish only by courting chance, as Cameron did in her embrace of mistakes and accidents. Her decision to halt, reverse or not invest in technical proficiency – photography's indiscriminate finish – is not, however, an accident.

We find an echo of Eastlake's article in a letter Cameron sent Herschel in 1864:

> I was interested in reading Sir David Brewster's eloquent speech on photography. I could not help wishing you had been writing on the subject and that you had spoken of my Photography [which is not] mere conventional topographic Photography – map making – & skeleton rendering of feature & form without that roundness & fulness of form & feature that modelling of flesh & limb which the focus I use only can give tho' called & condemned as 'out of focus'. What is focus – & who has the right to say what focus is the legitimate focus.[45]

In this often-quoted letter, Cameron argues that received notions of legitimate focus trap photography into 'map making', flattening a three-dimensional world into schematic signs that do not achieve 'modelling of flesh & limb'. For Cameron, 'the focus I use' is more than a way to avoid the issue of details. She wants to use her lens not by passively following what it is defined as able to do by its manufacturers – converge rays of light into one point – but as a way to react to, and interact with, the relative spatial, compositional and affective positions and relations between sitter, camera and photographer.[46]

The reference to Brewster's speech in the letter to Herschel is also a reference to sculpture, albeit a different one from Michelangelo's. Photography, in Brewster's speech, is a scientific or commercial instrument of use to art only to 'supply […] perfect copies of every work of art' with 'unerring accuracy' and precision of details.[47] Brewster does mention, however, one use of photography as a tool not to record sculptures but to make them: 'M. Willème in Paris has invented the new art of photosculpture' making a 'correct copy of the living figure'. He predicts that the 'wonderful process' will make portrait sculpture more affordable, so that

> our houses may be cheaply adorned with the busts of relatives and friends, and of those who, by their genius, their learning, or their virtues, are objects of interest or veneration.[48]

In Eastlake's terms, these would be nothing more than three-dimensional copies of sitters, with all the faults of unthinking detail that also barred photographs from achieving the status of 'authentic' portraits. Brewster (1781–1868) had been one of the first to write extensively about photography as part of his interest in 'engines of the fine art' – photography, electroplating and sculpting machines – new inventions that powered the production and reproduction of 'art manufactures', commodities inspired by or copying works of art or natural objects, using mechanical means.

Willème's short-lived photo-sculpture, using 360-degree photography, was a variant of the many sculpting machines that continued to be made and used in the twentieth century and beyond.[49] Cameron's awareness of these devices might have informed the characterization of her and Michelangelo's works as different from those 'cut out of such a machine'.[50] It is in the context of these debates about artistic authenticity versus mechanical or unthinking finish that Michelangelo's rough faces in *Brutus* or *Day* become a reference for Cameron's thinking about how to 'revolutionize photography'.[51] Her comparison with one-off direct carving, substituting the gestures of the sculptor with hammer and chisel with those of the photographer handling lenses, negatives and prints, left unanswered, however, the inherently multiple nature of (collodion) photography and, on a more practical level, the issue of how to make it profitable when relying on each print being made by her own hands. To come to terms fully with photography's nature as a medium of mechanical production and reproduction, Cameron had to look at the sculpture of her contemporaries.

This is what she did in 'Annals of my Glass House' in 1874. This autobiographical account, written as she was about to leave Britain partly because of financial problems, characterizes the camera as not a machine but 'a living thing, with voice and memory and creative vigour'.[52] Cameron's vision for her portraits, like Michelangelo's for his faces, develops from her interaction with it:

> When focussing and coming to something which to my eye was very beautiful, I stopped there instead of screwing on the lens to the more definite focus which all other photographers insist upon.[53]

Interestingly, she abandons Michelangelo while discussing Carlyle's portrait, but does return to sculpture in her description of Tennyson's reactions to the portrait by her he had nicknamed 'Dirty Monk':

> The Laureate has since said of it that he likes it better than any photograph that has been taken of him *except* one by Mayall; that *except* speaks for itself. The comparison seems too comical. It is rather like comparing one of Madame Tussaud's waxwork heads to one of Woolner's ideal heroic busts.[54]

The only sculptor associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, Thomas Woolner (1825–92) had portrayed Tennyson several times in profile medallions and busts that had been issued in several materials. Cameron had included a photograph by William Jeffrey of Woolner's 1857 Tennyson bust in the album she made for her sister 'Mia' (Maria Jackson) between 1863 and 1869.[55] Nineteenth-century sculpture was in some ways closer to photography than to the direct carvings of Michelangelo. Like photographs, Woolner's Tennysons came from original 'negatives' which were not for show: the moulds used to make the 'original plasters' which were then cast in bronze, copied in marble, or used to create editions in plaster or Parian. As in photography, the touch of the artist is mediated by mechanical means – moulding and casting from maquettes, the only 'original' sculpture made by the hands of the artist, and the sculpting machines used to make original plasters, were all indexical methods also used to turn original plasters

into marbles, bronzes or statuettes by expert mechanical labourers. As Joanne Lukitsh has shown, Woolner was interested in photography[56] and not adverse to complementing his modelling from life with mechanical copies – he procured direct casts of Tennyson's forehead and nose to improve the realism of his 1856 bust.[57] These were standard studio practices which allowed sculptors to concentrate on seeking new commissions, imperative to turn an expensive medium into a viable business. Cameron was at the time thinking along similar lines, letting her portraits be reduced to cartes-de-viste or giving her negatives to the Autotype Company to make carbon prints, a process that involved making copy-negatives – akin to new 'moulds' from her original ones.[58]

'Annals' is full of Carlyle-inspired notions of portraits that show 'the greatness of the inner as well as the features of the outer man'.[59] It is also infused with disdain for the Photographic Society of London and commercial photographic studios. Yet, by thinking about photography through Woolner as well as Michelangelo, Cameron might be closer to developing for photography a machine aesthetic where ideas, hands and technological apparatus can work together to make portraits in which the idealized heroes – privileged subjectivities unalienated by modernity – are both behind and in front of the camera. In this conceptualization of photography, Cameron's photographs and writings are a crucial moment in the ongoing dialogue in the history of photography between photographs as commodities for a machine age and photographs as works in which traces of the real, footprints of the world, mingle with the actions of human hands which endow the machine with a subjectivity of its own, marking them with fantasy, desire and imagination.

My thanks to the editors for pointing me towards a number of excellent points and important information in writing this chapter.

Notes

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2 Victoria Olsen, *From Life: Julia Margaret Cameron and Photography* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

3 Ibid., 17, 374.

4 Joanne Lukitsh, *Cameron: Her Work and Career* (Rochester, NY: International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, 1986).

5 Anon., 'Fine Art Gossip', *Athenaeum* (22 June 1867): 827.

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9 See Joanne Lukitsh's essay in this volume.
10 Ford, *Cameron Collection*, 117.
11 Robin Kelsey, *Photography and the Art of Chance* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015), 84, 87 and 93.
12 Mirjam Brusius, 'Impreciseness in Julia Margaret Cameron's Portrait Photographs', *History of Photography* 34, no. 4 (2010): 342–55, 345.
13 For example those by the studio 'Elliott & Fry', in the National Portrait Gallery, London, can be seen on their website: https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/ (accessed 22 September 2019).
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15 Elizabeth Eastlake to Hannah Brightwen, 24 April 1881, *The Letters of Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake*, ed. Julie Sheldon (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 503.
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19 Cameron to 'Dear Sir', 11 June 1867, in Graham Smith and Mike Weaver, 'A Letter by Julia Margaret Cameron', *History of Photography* 27, no. 1 (2003): 66–71, 66.
20 Lene Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength: The Reception of Michelangelo in Late Victorian England* (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 1998).
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23 Ibid., 221.
24 Linda Nochlin on portraiture in 'Some Women Realists', *Arts Magazine* (May 1974), 29.
25 Barlow, 'Facing the Past and Present', 234.
26 Ibid., 236.
27 Ford, 'Geniuses, Poets, and Painters', 18.
28 Østermark-Johansen, *Sweetness and Strength,* 120
29 Now in the Eastman Museum, Rochester, New York, https://collections.eastman.org/objects/31824/george-frederic-watts-album/related/24/list?page=2 (accessed 22 September 2019). On Cameron working with Watts, see Marta Weiss, *Julia Margaret Cameron: Photographs to Electrify You with Delight and Startle the World* (London: MACK in association with V&A Publishing, 2015), 38–9.
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8

Art, Reproduction and Reportage: Roger Fenton's Crimean Photographs

Sophie Gordon

Despite the acknowledgement of Roger Fenton (1819–69) as a significant Victorian artistic photographer, the photographs he took in 1855 during the Crimean War have been described as 'propaganda' intended to 'counteract the negative depiction of the campaign in *The Times*'.[1] With Fenton considered a Government stooge, it is, perhaps, not surprising that historians of photography have found the Crimean photographs difficult to incorporate into Fenton's story. Noted authorities on Fenton have suggested that Prince Albert (1819–61) may have had a role in commissioning the photographs or that the publisher Thomas Agnew and Sons was instructed to send a photographer to the Crimea to produce images intended to counteract the contemporary criticism of the war.[2]

A careful study of the visual sources as well as letters written by Roger Fenton, however, provides clear evidence that Agnew and Sons provided Fenton with a very specific commercial and artistic brief: to provide photographs to serve as studies for the painting by Thomas Jones Barker (1815–1882), *The Allied Generals with the Officers of Their Respective Staffs before Sebastopol* (1856) (Figure 8.1). The publisher also organized exhibitions of Fenton's Crimean photographs, which were staged in twenty-two British cities between 1855 and 1856. With these exhibitions reportedly visited by 2 million people in Britain, Agnew and Sons earned a substantial sum of money from admission fees and catalogue sales. Fenton's Crimean photographs participated in a visual culture in which works of fine art, the purchase of art reproductions and access to photographic images were inseparable from the public's knowledge of the war through reportage in the press.[3]

The Crimean War 1853–6

The Ottoman Empire declared war on Russia on 4 October 1853, and Britain and France joined the Ottomans in March 1854. As the campaign in the Crimean Peninsula continued, reports of the sufferings of British troops became harder to ignore, particularly as winter set in, and there was sustained criticism of the senior

military leadership. News of the war was reported daily in papers and magazines. There was little censorship at the time – reports came in from accredited journalists, such as William Howard Russell (1820–1907) for *The Times*; soldiers wrote letters for publication and observers or visitors to the battlefield published their own accounts. Many of these reports concentrated on the experiences of the ordinary soldier, suffering unnecessarily due to poor leadership in battle and poor logistical management in general. These reports began to change popular attitudes towards the war, although support for the ordinary soldier remained strong. The Poet Laureate, Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–92), wrote *The Charge of the Light Brigade* (1854) as a response to Russell's article in *The Times* describing this charge in the Battle of Balaklava. Russell's reports undoubtedly contributed to the fall of Prime Minister Lord Aberdeen's government in early 1855. The new political administration set about trying to improve conditions for the troops. By the time Fenton arrived on 8 March 1855 in Balaklava, where the British army was based, supplies were starting to arrive more frequently. The weather was also improving. The war Fenton experienced was quite different from the one fought the previous year.

Fenton's commission to take photographs in the Crimea

It is no surprise that Agnew and Sons turned to Fenton as the best and most appropriate photographer to work in the Crimea. Fenton had made photographs in Russia in 1852, when political tensions with Britain were rising. His photographs from this expedition were exhibited in Britain the same year and annually until the end of the Crimean War in 1856. *The Illustrated London News* published wood-engraved reproductions of Fenton's 1852 Russian photographs in the early months of the Crimean conflict, closely connecting Fenton's photographs with current events in their reader's minds.[4] Fenton received his commission from Agnew and Sons in the autumn of 1854, but did not leave Britain until 20 February 1855. The letters Fenton wrote to his wife Grace and to Thomas and William Agnew, the commissioning agents, make the terms of his photographic commission clear.[5] The Agnews asked Fenton to produce portraits of most of the senior officers and significant individuals, topographical subjects and photographic compositions of figures and groups—compositions which evoked situations in which the troops were placed at the scene. Fenton described his task in his letters as obtaining 'pictures of the persons & subjects likely to be historically interesting'.[6] Whilst little direction about the choice of the topographical subjects was given, Fenton clearly had more instruction regarding the portraits. In the letters he expresses concerns over his ability to photograph everyone required for the commission, including the Duke of Cambridge and Sir John Fox Burgoyne, who had left the Crimea before Fenton arrived, and whom Fenton photographed after he returned to Britain in July 1855.[7]

Whilst there was clearly an agreement for Fenton's work to be put on public display when he returned to Britain, Agnew and Sons also commissioned Thomas Jones Barker to produce a large oil painting around the subject of the allied assault on Sevastopol. The painter was expected to include in the painting as many of the senior military

figures as possible, along with other notable individuals. Barker was to copy and incorporate Fenton's photographs into his painting in order to get the best likeness of each person. For *The Allied Generals with the Officers of Their Respective Staffs before Sebastopol* (Figure 8.1) Barker copied as many as fifty of Fenton's photographs. The visual evidence of the painting makes it clear that Barker copied some figures exactly; for other individuals, the painter combined two or more photographs, sometimes using one person's head with another person's body. Occasionally he copied entire groups, such as those in the Fenton photograph, *The 8th Hussars Cooking Hut*, transposed almost directly from the photograph into the lower left corner of the painting (although omitting the woman at the back of the group). Barker also copied Fenton's *Wounded Zouave and Vivandière*, inverting its composition and placing it at the lower right of the painting (Figure 8.2).[8] A comparison of Barker's painting with Fenton's photographs also reveals that the figure of Florence Nightingale in the former was based on Fenton's study of another woman, Fanny Duberley, a telling indication that Barker did not treat Fenton's photographic study as an inviolate document, at least for portraits of women.

Barker was particularly known as a painter of contemporary historical scenes. Working with Agnew and Sons and other printsellers, he achieved commercial success through the sales of the copyright and the graphic reproductions of his works, usually following their public exhibition.[9] Barker displayed a painting with the expectation that visitors would purchase a printed reproduction: sales of the prints were expected to make money, not the sale of the painting. This procedure meant that commissioning the original subject and acquiring the copyright for its graphic reproduction were paramount. It was reported at the time that Agnew and Sons spent £10,000 on Fenton's Crimea commission.[10] The publisher's commission of photographic studies for Barker's painting goes some way to explaining why Fenton photographed certain individuals in different poses.

Figure 8.1 Thomas Jones Barker, *The Allied Generals with the Officers of Their Respective Staffs before Sebastopol*, 1856, oil on canvas, 64.5 × 14.1 cm. (25.4 × 5.6 in). Private Collection, London. Reproduced with permission of Sotheby's.

Figure 8.2 Roger Fenton, *Wounded Zouave and Vivandiere*, 5 May 1855, albumen silver print, 17.4 × 13.1 cm. Royal Collection, RCIN 2500401. Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019.

For example, Fenton photographed Omar Pasha, the commander of the Ottoman troops, General Pélissier, the commander-in-chief of the French troops, and General Bosquet, a corps commander, all in the same way: seated in a three-quarters pose and in profile on horseback. We can infer that the Agnews may have instructed Fenton to photograph the most senior officers on horseback, as this is how the officers appear in his photographs and how they appear in Barker's painting. The Barker commission is evidence of the artistic imperatives behind Fenton's production of many of his images in the Crimea. In addition to portraits of individual sitters, Fenton produced several group portraits. These groups focus particularly on the soldiers of the regiments

who had participated in the Light Brigade charge, presumably because the publisher anticipated greater public interest in these men following the immense fame of their action. In Britain, the public narrative of the war already saw the Chargers as heroes. A number of Fenton's groups also included non-combatants, including women, known, respectively, in England and in France, as sutlers and *vivandières*, helping with cooking, laundry, general supplies and first aid.[11]

Fenton photographed the personal servants, described as 'Nubians', who accompanied some of the senior officers, and the locals who helped with construction work and other menial tasks, including men referred to as 'Croats' and 'Tartars.' The number of these portraits of 'types' is more than would perhaps be expected, suggesting Fenton's personal interest in the subject matter; also there is both photographic and artistic precedent for concentrating on the non-combatants in depictions of warfare. The 'exotic' Zouaves and non-European men had been subject matter for artists depicting India and the Middle East for several decades as part of a broader colonial Orientalist project.[12] The Zouaves had gained a reputation for bravery during the war and became favourite studies for artists. They appear in various media from grand oil paintings to a private sketch made by Queen Victoria (1819–1901).[13] Fenton may have thought the subject matter would appeal to Barker as well as his potential customers.

Agnew's exhibitions of Fenton's photographs

Whilst Barker was selecting Fenton's photographs to use as studies for his painting, Agnew and Sons was mounting an impressive series of exhibitions of the photographs. The dedicated display of the photographs had been part of Fenton's commission from the onset of the project. The publisher opened the first exhibition of Fenton's photographs in London in September 1855, with 280 photographs displayed in the Gallery of the Water Colour Society, Pall Mall, London. Over the next year this exhibition was followed by at least twenty-six different more in locations across Britain, from Glasgow to Exeter. Some exhibitions ran concurrently, so several sets of the Fenton's photographs were required. Each venue had its own printed catalogue and, whilst small changes in the selection of photographs were made among some venues, each exhibition was essentially the same. Agnew and Sons published the majority of the photographs in 1855, using card mounts with letterpress captions giving photographer and publisher credits. Some photographs, including those portraits Fenton took in Britain, were published later, with the last batch appearing on 12 May 1856. Fenton's letters to Thomas Agnew suggest that they were thinking about publicity in advance of the exhibitions in Britain, and Fenton urged him to start making engravings straight away.[14]

Exhibition catalogues, which accompanied every show, contained an order form and price list for visitors to buy a selection of works. Photographs could be acquired singly or in groups and were priced according to their significance. The most expensive photographs, at £1/1/0, were *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*, *The Council of War* and *Tombs of the Generals on Cathcart's Hill*.[15] News of the fall of Sevastopol in early September 1855 was reported at roughly the same time that Fenton's photographs first

went on display in London, and the long-awaited victory would have given particular significance to *The Council of War* as it purported to show the three commanders of the allied armies planning the final assault on Sevastopol (Figure 8.3). The three men thus came to represent the victory of the alliance.

Concurrently with the exhibitions, Fenton's photographs also received significant attention in *The Illustrated London News*. Even whilst Fenton was in the Crimea, his commission had been discussed and anticipated in the press. Portraits of significant

Figure 8.3 Roger Fenton, *The Council of War. Lord Raglan, Omar Pacha and General Pelissier*, June 1855, albumen silver print, 19.1 × 15.8 cm. Royal Collection, RCIN 2500527. Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019.

officers, by Fenton and others, were popular subjects for engravings, as were scenes from Fenton's expedition. *The Illustrated London News* reproduced an image of his photographic van, with his assistant Marcus Sparling, in November 1855, and a group portrait, *Croats*, the following month.[16] The vivid and graphic reporting of the war in *The Illustrated London News* led to a significant increase in its readership, and the inclusion of engravings after Fenton's photographs was undoubtedly part of this success, raising circulation by 50,000 to 200,000 copies sold each week.[17] This, along with the extraordinary public attendance at the exhibitions, makes it clear that the public responded strongly to Fenton's images of the war.

By March 1856, it was being reported that 2 million visitors had seen one of Fenton's exhibitions somewhere in Britain.[18] The visiting public responded enthusiastically to Fenton's work, and reviews published across the country were uniformly positive. Evidence in some reviews of the tour of Fenton's work suggests that the public found the experience of viewing the photographs as both informative and extremely emotional. Their emotional response is, perhaps, surprising, but the public brought to their experience of viewing the photographs an exceptionally sound knowledge of the war, from over a year's worth of newspaper reports consisting of detailed and distressing stories of death, injury and destruction. This was acknowledged in the press at the time—the audience for the exhibitions was described as being 'well prepared by reading'.[19] Contemporary reviews noted, particularly, the emotional pull of *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*, with one reviewer writing that the photograph was 'a reminiscence that will draw forth many a silent tear'.[20]

With their knowledge of the war, the Victorian viewers to the exhibitions did not need narrative nor action scenes in the photographs, as these events existed already in the viewer's imagination. Rather, exhibitions of Fenton's works provided visitors the opportunity to engage with the photographs as images of a real, but also imaginative space, into which they could project collective narratives of the war, based upon what they had read. Viewing *The Valley of the Shadow of Death*, which depicts only a ravine with scattered round shot, a visitor could populate the scene depicted in the photograph with their own images of the conflict that had occurred on this site. The title, a phrase from Psalm 23, prompted contemplation of the line between life and death. Many of Fenton's landscapes of views across the plains towards the besieged city of Sevastopol present bleak and empty spaces. He captured the desolation of war in these photographs by leaving the scenes unoccupied, save for 1 or 2 military figures. The photograph of the cemetery on Cathcart's Hill, a depiction of the impact and legacy of battle, shows only a solitary figure positioned contemplating the hastily erected grave markers. In contrast, *The Council of War* is a strong depiction of the leaders of the three main allied nations working together to defeat a common enemy.

Some reviewers of the exhibitions felt that many of the portraits in the exhibition were problematic. One reviewer in Liverpool commented, 'The portraits are generally the least satisfactory class.'[21] The photographic invitation to a viewer's imaginative projection worked well, however, when a portrait could be read within the dominant narrative of the war, which characterized the conflict as one of great suffering and great bravery. An example is the portrait of Lord Balgonie (1831–57), an officer in the Grenadier Guards (Figure 8.4). The portrait, which has been described as the first photograph of shellshock, is roughly composed, with a sheet half-pulled across the

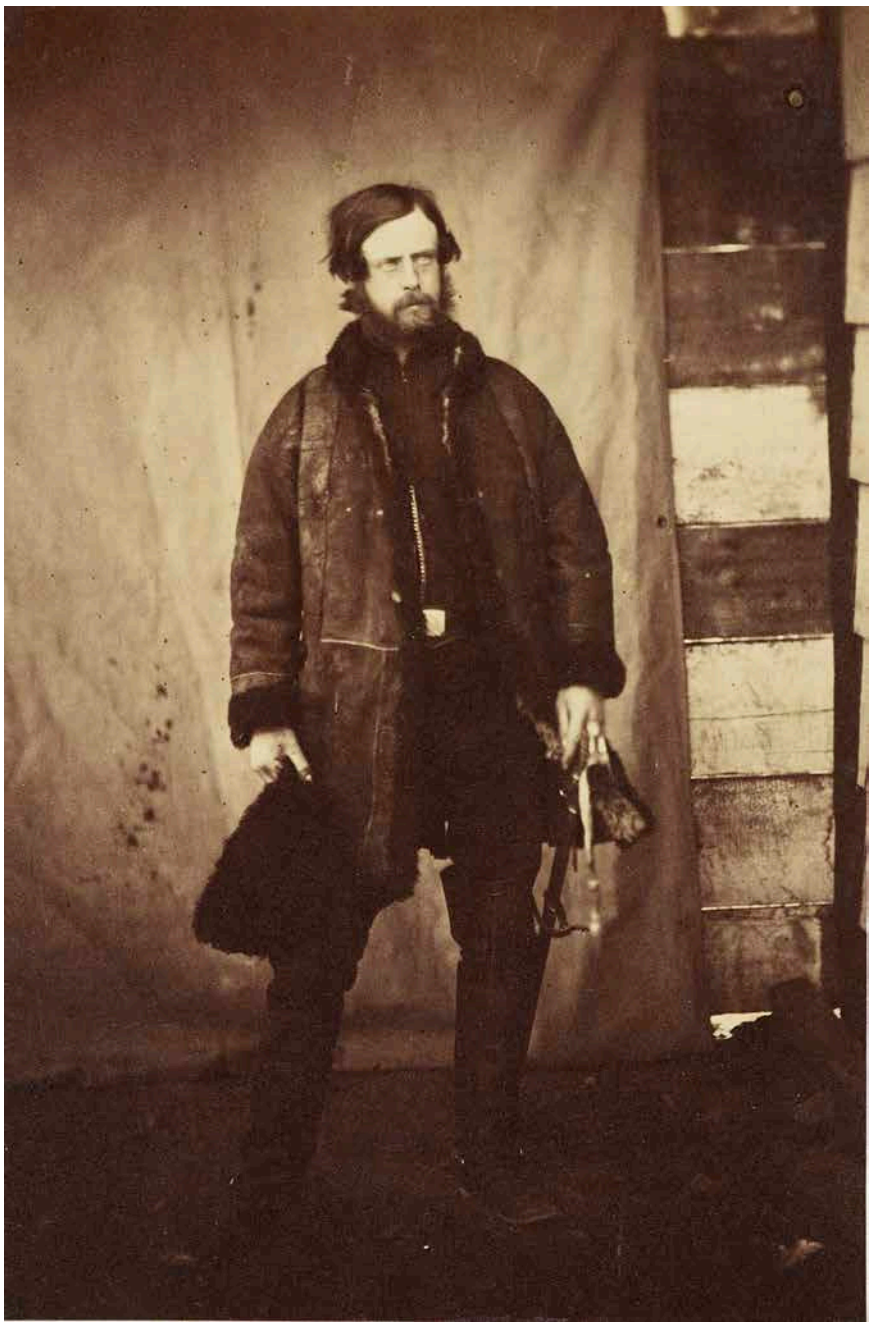

Figure 8.4 Roger Fenton, *Lord Balgonie*, 1855, albumen silver print, 17.7 × 11.7 cm. Royal Collection, RCIN 2500273. Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019.

back of the wall, in front of which Balgonie stands, staring blankly into the distance.[22] Wooden planks are revealed behind him, suggesting a temporary structure built because of the conflict. His disheveled appearance and pose suggests he has recently stepped off the battlefield. (His premature death in 1857 was attributed to the hardships of the war.[23]) Fenton included Balgonie's portrait in all of the exhibitions of his photographs across Britain, a decision which suggests that he felt this photograph had something to contribute to the debates about the war and the impact that the conflict had on returning veterans.

The reception of Fenton's Crimean photographs

Whilst the audience for Fenton's photographic exhibitions was significant, such high visitor figures did not translate into sales of his work to the public. In December 1856 Agnew and Sons sold the wet collodion glass negatives and remaining photographic prints to their rivals, Paul and Dominic Colnaghi & Co. Very soon Fenton's photographs were on sale at a much-reduced price.[24] The publisher's decision could have concerned their promotion of Barker's painting, completed that year. Agnew and Sons had already made a large profit from admission fees to the exhibitions of Fenton's photographs. It is possible that public interest in the tour had run its course. It is in the subsequent translation of paintings – based on Fenton's photographs – into graphic versions that we begin to see how the negotiated veracity of the photographs and the imaginative space that they could create for a viewer at an exhibition became problematic after the conclusion of the war.

Exhibition halls provided a public space where an audience could gather to think about the war through viewing a sequence of images, in the company of others who were also affected by the events. When translated into engravings, the photographs lost some of their immediacy, but they also became easier to consume. A good example of this is the transformation undergone by Fenton's *The Council of War*, the group portrait of the three commanders, on display when news of the allied victory arrived in Britain. The photograph quickly became one of the most commented upon of all his Crimean works, with even Queen Victoria singling out this image in her journal.[25] Augustus Egg, another prominent history painter, produced a painting after Fenton's photograph of *The Council of War*. Egg's painting was exhibited in 1856 at Graves's Gallery in London.[26] Egg departed from Fenton's photographic image in several ways, most significantly in changing the position of General Pélissier into a more dynamic one, with Omar Pasha looking up admiringly at him. This depiction of Ottoman deference to Péllissier was suited to the contemporary narrative which described Pélissier as the main force in the allied successes in June 1855, which lead to the conclusion of the war. Egg also added figures in the background and a glimpse of the regimental encampments, placing the figures securely in a military setting. Egg and Barker's transformation of Fenton's photographs allowed subtle changes to be made which aided the public's reception of the works. Perhaps the graphic content of the photographs and their emotional affect were too much for the Victorian public to desire to purchase Fenton's photographs of the front and view them within a domestic setting. The war had been traumatic at home as well as at the front, with a particular

focus on the conditions in Britain of the returning wounded soldiers in photographs, prints and paintings.[27] It is also possible that the photographs were too ambiguous to deliver a clear message to the public, and Egg added more detail to make the message of the scene clearer.

The appeal of the subject of *The Council of War* was clear, given that it was symbolic of the allied victory. The mezzotint reproduction of Egg's painting is significantly larger than Fenton's photograph (Figure 8.5). If the number of surviving prints available

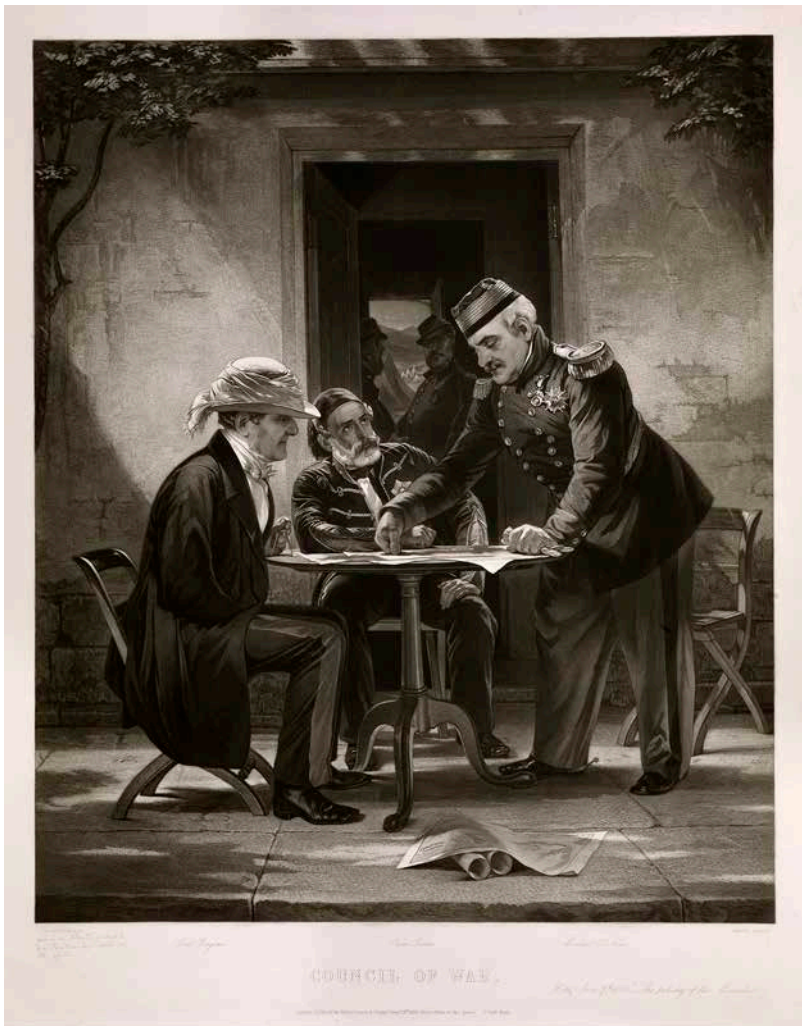

Figure 8.5 Samuel Bellin, after Augustus Egg, after Roger Fenton, *Council of War*, 1857, mixed media mezzotint, 74.7 × 60.3 cm (plate). Royal Collection, RCIN 661975. Royal Collection Trust/ © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2019.

today is any indication of the success of Egg's work, the mezzotint reproduction was hugely popular. As with Barker's painting and its subsequent reproductive prints, the connection of these images with Fenton's photograph was not hidden. The importance of truthfulness for recent events was paramount and for the Victorian public the link to photography guaranteed this, but Egg's representation of Fenton's photograph repositions it securely within the public narrative of the war already being established through the multiple written accounts and images appearing in the public domain. Additionally, the larger size probably made the work more attractive as an object for framing and display.

Taking into account both the popularity of the exhibitions of Fenton's work and the transformation of his photographs into woodcuts, paintings and engravings, it is clear that the Victorian public were prepared to accept multiple visual contexts simultaneously for his photographs: as war reportage; as emotional and poetic reflections upon the war; commentary on the heroism of the individuals presented; as 'truthful' source material for other artists. Today, to understand Fenton's Crimean photographs, we need a less rigid approach to categorizing them as reportage, produced by an artistically innovative photographer. With a greater willingness to see Fenton's Crimean photographs not just as finished works, but also as interim studies which can undergo transformation through context and reproduction, we can develop more nuanced understandings within this remarkable group of photographs. Clearly the relationship between photography and art in the 1850s was closely knit, and seen as not only acceptable but entirely beneficial by the Victorian audiences.

I am immensely grateful for the contribution of Louise Pearson who worked with me on Fenton in 2016–17 and painstakingly cross-referenced Fenton's photographs with Barker's painting.

Notes

1 Orlando Figes, *Crimea* (London: Penguin Book, 2010), 308. Figes is not alone in interpreting Fenton's work in this way, but he is perhaps the most influential writer to do so.

2 See a summary of previous discussions of Fenton's Crimean work in Gordon Baldwin, Malcolm Daniel and Sarah Greenough, (eds) *All the Mighty World: The Photographs of Roger Fenton, 1852–1860* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2004), 17–24, 205, 223.

3 Some of this evidence has been implied, but the various threads have not previously been gathered together. See Helmut Gernsheim, *Roger Fenton Photographer of the Crimean War* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1954) and Ulrich Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach Publishers, 2001). *Belfast Newsletter*, 31 March 1856, 2, 'The pictures have received the marked approval of Her Majesty, and have been visited by more than two millions of persons in the various towns where they were exhibited.'

4 For example, *The Illustrated London News*, 'Russian Peasants, from a photograph by Fenton', 4 February 1854, 88.

5 Transcripts of all the surviving letters are at www.rogerfenton.dmu.ac.uk. The website is the source of all the letters cited here.
6 Letter from Roger Fenton to William Agnew, 18–20 May 1855.
7 Fenton expresses concerns or implies this in several letters, for example, in the letter from Roger Fenton to William Agnew, 9 April 1855: 'It will take me longer than I calculated to get through my work here.'
8 See Sophie Gordon, *Shadows of War: Roger Fenton's Photographs of the Crimea, 1855* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2017), 66–7, for other examples of photographs which have been incorporated into Barker's painting.
9 The evidence of surviving engravings and their public sale listed in newspapers and journals presents a clear pattern of the commission of a painting followed by the sale of its engraved version. There was a similar commission from Agnew's to Barker for another Crimean painting (*General Williams and his staff leaving Kars*, oil on canvas, 1857) which resulted in an almost identical situation: an engraving was issued in June 1857, following the exhibition of the painting in London, alongside *The Allied Generals.* Barker does not appear to have used photographs as source material for the Kars painting, but a reviewer in *The Illustrated London News* still criticized the work for being 'too much like a photograph'. See Peter Harringon, 'The Defence of Kars: Paintings by William Simpson and Thomas Jones Barker', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 69, no. 277 (Spring 1991): 22–8.
10 *Bristol Mercury*, 'Fenton's War Picture', 15 March 1856, 5; Geoffrey Agnew, *Agnew's, 1817–1967* (London: The Bradbury Agnew Press Ltd., 1967), 67.
11 Fenton's photographs of the royal children, taken in 1854, had also been used as a source material by the artist Carl Haag (1820–1915), who produced watercolour portraits of the photographs as a gift for Queen Victoria. Whilst Barker was not unique in copying from numerous photographs in his painting, he probably was one of the few artists to base his entire work on photographic evidence alone. The *Allied Generals before Sebastopol* may mark a new imperative as regards expectations of actuality in painterly commemorations of actual events. This imperative may be at work in Agnew and Sons's decision to publish *Key Plate to the Painting 'Allied Generals before Sebastopol'* (lithograph, 18 May 1859), which included the phrase 'Painted by T. J. Barker Esq. K.L.H. from Photographs and Sketches taken in the Crimea expressly for this picture by Roger Fenton Esq.' The *Key Plate* identified every person in the painting and named a few of the more significant topographical features. Perhaps the mention of Fenton in the *Key Plate* is an indication of the strength of Fenton's reputation at this time. It is probable that anyone interested in purchasing the *Key Plate* or visiting the painting on display would also have been familiar with Fenton's war photographs from *The Illustrated London News.*
12 See, for example, Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, (eds) *Photography's Orientalism: New Essays on Colonial Representation* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2013); Mary Anne Stevens, ed. *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse: European Painters in North Africa and the Near East* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1984).
13 Two examples of this are an oil painting by Émile-Jean Horace Vernet, *Zouaves at the Malakoff* (oil on canvas, 1856, RCIN 406470), which Queen Victoria gave to Prince Albert in 1857, and the Queen's own sketches of Zouaves guarding the royal palace in Paris, made on 23 August 1855 (pencil and watercolour, RCIN 980029.cz).
14 Letter from Roger Fenton to William Agnew, 18–20 May 1855.
15 Thomas Agnew and Sons, *Exhibition of Photographic Pictures taken in the Crimea, by Roger Fenton, Esq.* (London: Thomas Brettell, 1855). This first edition of the

exhibition catalogue from 1855 did not contain the notices from the press which were included in subsequent editions.

16 *The Illustrated London News*, 'Mr Fenton's Photographic Van – From the Crimean Exhibition', 17 November 1855, 557. *The Illustrated London News*, 'Croats: from a photograph by R. Fenton in the Crimea Exhibition', 29 December 1855, 753.

17 Christopher Hibbert, *The Illustrated London News' Social History of Victorian Britain* (London: Angus & Robertson 1975), 13. The abolition of the newspaper tax also occurred on 1 July 1855, helping to keep costs down.

18 Op. cit. *Belfast Newsletter*, 31 March 1856, 2.

19 *London Daily News*, 20 September 1855. Reprinted in Thomas Agnew and Sons, *Exhibition of the Photographic Pictures Taken in the Crimea*, by Roger Fenton, Esq. (London: Thomas Brettell, 1856), 5.

20 *Literary Gazette*, 22 September 1855. Reprinted in Agnew, *Exhibition of the Photographic Pictures Taken in the Crimea*, 1856, 12.

21 'Exhibition of the Photographs of the Crimea', *Liverpool Photographic Journal* 2, no. 23 (10 November 1855): 134.

22 Taylor Downing, *Breakdown: The Crisis of Shell Shock on the Somme* (London: Little, Brown, 2016), 335.

23 He 'suffered severely from the hardships of the Crimean campaign' and returned home in 1855. William Fraser, *The Melvilles, Earls of Melville and The Leslies, Earls of Leven* (Edinburgh, privately printed, 1890), 379. Balgonie's death was reported in an obituary to have occurred 'after a lingering illness, brought on by his services in the Crimean campaign', *Dundee Perth and Cupar Advertiser*, 4 September 1857, 4.

24 'Now prepared to sell at a considerable reduction on the published price', *The Athenaeum*, 'Fenton's Photographs', 3 January 1857, 2.

25 'The most historic and interesting of these is, the picture of *The Council of War*', 'Photographs from the Crimea', *The Athenaeum*, 29 September 1855, 1118. Queen Victoria wrote, 'We dined alone, & looked at some most interesting photos, taken by Mr Fenton, in the Crimea, – portraits & views extremely well done, – one, most interesting, of poor Ld Raglan, Pélissier & Omar Pasha, sitting together, on the morning, on which the Quarries were taken.' Royal Archives VIC/MAIN/QVJ, 8 August 1844.

26 The location of Egg's painting today is unknown, but the mezzotint issued by Graves & Co. is in numerous collections.

27 See, for example, the photographs and paintings of the wounded soldiers visited by Queen Victoria, commissioned by her from Joseph Cundall and Robert Howlett. Examples of these, and other works, are reproduced in Gordon, *Shadows of War*, 2017.

9

Impressionism in Photography

Hope Kingsley

In December 1890, the British photographer George Davison (1854–1930) gave a comprehensive lecture, 'Impressionism in Photography', on the relevance of contemporary painting to an equivalent school of progressive photographers, amongst whom he counted himself.[1] Davison's lecture, presented at the Society of Arts in London[2] and subsequently published in several periodicals,[3] was an extensive discussion of Impressionism and its relevance to photography. His embrace of Impressionism was remarkably advanced at a time when that style and theory of painting was still peripheral to the artistic mainstream in Britain, and his lecture was key to the introduction of Impressionist ideas to British photographic circles. Davison offered an ambitious thesis for Impressionism's application to photography. That he felt it necessary to do so was partly due to the attention – and criticism – that his photographs had attracted at recent exhibitions of the Photographic Society of Great Britain. Two months before his lecture, Davison's photograph, *An Old Farmstead* (1889) (Figure 9.1), had been both praised and derided for its soft-focus effects, characteristics that were equated with the rapid, sketchy brushwork seen in Impressionist painting. Thus, Davison was validating his own approach to photography. More broadly, by aligning the aims of photographers with those of painters, he was arguing for photography's equivalence as an artistic medium.

Davison provided an unusually specific account of Impressionism at the very beginning of its absorption into photographic aesthetics.[4] Histories of photography typically place photographic Impressionism outside of its proper time frame, back in the 1860s or forward to turn-of-the-century Pictorialism. Such accounts are dependent on generic formal characteristics of diffused or soft-focus resolution and a quickly seen and captured representation associated with later snapshot photography.[5] While those narratives may be visually compelling, they are often anachronistic, mistaking resemblance for causation.[6] This essay re-situates Impressionism in late 1880s and early 1890s British photography and contextualizes Davison's ideas within his artistic milieu. It considers Davison's principal sources: writings by the New English Art Club painter Francis Bate (1853–1950), the Anglo-

Figure 9.1 George Davison, *An Old Farmstead*, 1889. Photogravure, printed after 1897. Image: 15.4 × 20.4 cm. Published as 'The Onion Field' in *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly* 18, April 1907. Reproduced with the permission of the Wilson Centre for Photography. Photo credit: Wilson Centre for Photography.

American photographer Peter Henry Emerson (1856–1936) and the French art critic Ernest Chesneau (1833–1890). And it looks at his artistic inspirations at the New English Art Club and Claude Monet's (1840–1926) solo show in London in 1889, both of which were reviewed in the photographic press.

Davison's thesis

Davison opened his lecture by proclaiming that this was 'an age of scientific enquiry in every branch of knowledge', including 'the painter's art'. The scientific basis for art was founded in material evidence: 'natural facts, facts of atmosphere, facts of light, facts of colour', which freed art from 'conventions and … dogma' and constituted 'a return to nature'. He explained that for artists following such propositions, 'truth to nature is the first article of their faith, and the truest that science teaches concerning light and colour, and the manner that the eye sees is made a guiding principle'. This approach was taken up by 'the body of painters known as impressionists … [who] consulted only their impressions of natural scenes, and to those impressions, painted'.[7] Davison argued that the 'newer school of photographers'[8] embraced the same principles and practice, turning photography's limitations to pictorial advantage:

> The painter may not play with the tone or relative values of his subject and picture. He may not falsify what the eye sees in respect of focus and atmosphere, nor indulge in several points of sight. He cannot do much more than the photographer to express the relative interests of his subject, which must generally depend upon the point of focus of the eye.[9]

Davison's sources: Naturalistic painting and photography

Davison described 'a more judicious section' of the Impressionist painters as 'The Naturalistic School', whose tenets could be found in 'a fresh, direct, convincing little work which every photographer should read'.[10] The book was Francis Bate's *The Naturalistic School of Painting*, published in 1887 from Bate's 1886 articles in the periodical *The Artist*.[11] Bate was the Secretary of the New English Art Club, an exhibiting society founded in 1886 and inspired by French rural Naturalist artists and the practice of *plein air* painting.[12] Bate had defined 'a good picture' as dependent on 'the first impression', which should be 'as nearly as possible, the first impression of nature'.[13] This seemed an artistic opportunity for photographers, whose cameras could be said to record just that first impression of nature. Davison declared that 'it is only in the light of such views, then, that I care to examine or put forward, the claims of photography … to be admitted as a capable means of artistic expression'.[14]

There was substantial overlap between Bate's ideas and those of Peter Henry Emerson, Davison's colleague at London's Camera Club. In 1889, Emerson had published *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art*, which presented a detailed (and often intemperate) argument against conventionalism in art and photography. Emerson heralded a new approach largely inspired by the painters of the New English Art Club, whom he described as 'an earnest and sincere band of young artists … whose watchword is "Naturalism"'.[15] Emerson and Bate covered many of the same concepts in very similar language, and both used 'Naturalistic' in the titles of their publications.[16] They advocated differential focus to match the eye's imperfect optical capacities and proposed a centralized composition to align the picture's emphasis with the viewer's attentiveness to key parts of the original scene. Another shared concern was the representation of the broad luminosity of ambient light with the limited range of tones achievable with paint on canvas or a photograph on paper. This led both Bate and Emerson to advocate a restricted or subdued tonal range. Davison addressed these pictorial and technical elements in his lecture, but only credited Bate. This would have seemed a surprising omission, as Emerson's book was widely discussed in photographic circles. From the time of its publication, it was rarely out of the pages of the photographic press, which revelled in the heated debates between supporters and detractors. But there was animosity between Davison and Emerson, who attacked Davison's increasing prominence as the Secretary of the Camera Club, an association that Emerson had helped found. Emerson also criticized Davison's photographs, as will be discussed later in this essay.

Davison would have seen the new Naturalistic painting in the annual exhibitions of New English Art Club, nearly all of which were covered in the photographic press.[17]

The *Amateur Photographer* recommended the NEAC's inaugural 1886 show to its readers:

> The French method of realistic treatment is here happily combined with painstaking endeavour and English thoroughness … The colours which predominate are quiet in tones, but here and there a bright flash shows the value of keeping down superlatives. The proper "values" of colours, and strict attention to technical excellence, are essentials.[18]

Those aesthetics are seen in Thomas Frederick Goodall's (1856–1944) *Rockland Broad* (1883), which was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1885 (Figure 9.2). *Rockland Broad* is thought to have been similar to a now lost canvas, which Goodall presented at the NEAC's 1886 exhibition.[19] Goodall was one of the founders of the NEAC, and his painting shows the characteristics described by the *Amateur Photographer*: the subdued palette accurately portrays the grey day and is punctuated by small flashes of colour. Broad pale bands of water and sky bracket the reeds and shore, a reedman on his punt and a farmhouse tucked low among bare trees. *Rockland Broad* is a reductive synthesis of the place shown in subsequent photographs that Goodall made with Peter Henry Emerson and which were included in their photographic portfolio, *Life and Landscape on the Norfolk Broads* (1887). The upright posture of Goodall's painted reedman is seen in one of the photographic studies (Figure 9.3), while the overall composition is closest to another photograph (Figure 9.4). The *Amateur Photographer* recommended the 1886 NEAC paintings to amateur photographers for 'admirable

Figure 9.2 Thomas Frederick Goodall, *Rockland Broad, Norfolk*, 1883, oil on canvas, 91.8 × 153.2 cm. Reproduced with the permission of Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery and the Norfolk Museums Service. Photo credit: Norfolk Museums Service (Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery).

Figure 9.3 Peter Henry Emerson and Thomas Frederick Goodall, 'The Gladdon-Cutter's Return', 1885. Platinum print. Image: 22.7 × 28.8 cm. Published as Plate XXX, in P. H. Emerson and T. F. Goodall, *Life and Landscape on the Norfolk Broads*, 1887. Reproduced with the permission of the Wilson Centre for Photography. Photo credit: Wilson Centre for Photography.

posing, arrangement of subject, direct *motif*, and careful lighting'.[20] And Goodall and Emerson's collaboration is an important – if atypical – example of an NEAC painter working closely with a photographer. Emerson is usually seen as the project's mastermind, but the chronology and sequencing of the paintings and photographs suggest that the photographic itinerary tracked Goodall's established painting spots.[21]

Davison's sources: Monet and Impressionism

In his 'Impressionism' lecture, Davison celebrated 'the perfection of naturalness of some of these genuine Impressionist paintings', which inspired in him a 'feeling of exultation, when one has happened suddenly upon a subtle fact of natural light, colour, air or form happily touched off'.[22] He most likely saw French Impressionist paintings in April and May 1889, when the Goupil Gallery presented 'Twenty Impressions by Monet'. This would be the artist's only solo London exhibition in his lifetime.[23] When Davison described Impressionist paintings in his 1890 lecture, his words echoed some of Monet's Goupil pictures: 'a boat seen from the shore level on a stormy day over the crests of the surf' is the subject of *Marine–Tempest*, while a 'broken bit of ground' suggests the broad rough foreground of *Le Moulin de Orgemont*

Figure 9.4 Peter Henry Emerson and Thomas Frederick Goodall, 'Quanting the Gladdon', 1885. Platinum print. Image: 21.9 × 29.3 cm. Published as Plate XXXIV, in P. H. Emerson and T. F. Goodall, *Life and Landscape on the Norfolk Broads*, 1887. Reproduced with the permission of the Wilson Centre for Photography. Photo credit: Wilson Centre for Photography.

(1873) (Figure 9.5).[24] But Davison's pleasure in Impressionist painting was not yet widely shared. He acknowledged 'hot opposition' to the 'new influences' in painting, focused on 'the pictures of M. Monet'.[25] Monet's approach was unconventional, as Davison explained by quoting the French art historian and critic Ernest Chesneau, an early supporter of the French Impressionist painters:[26]

> The eye of the public – trained to exclusiveness by long intercourse with other and no less legitimate readings of nature, and prevented in a great measure by the abuse of facile tricks of painting – refuses as yet to recognise the purpose and merit of this school. But it will come to it.[27]

Davison's quotation came from Chesneau's *The Education of the Artist* (1880, English translation, 1886) which declared the virtues of Impressionist innovations, including bold colour, high-key tonal values and expressive brushwork.[28] Chesneau acknowledged the difficulties in reading work whose execution is 'harsh, summary, necessarily rapid, and it appears incomplete',[29] and while Monet's wintry view of the landscape near his home at Argenteuil (Figure 9.5) shows a subdued, Naturalistic palette, the bravura brushwork was liable to provoke the critique that Chesneau identified in his text.

For his part, Peter Henry Emerson recommended the Monet exhibition at Goupil, among other shows in London that spring, to 'all students of Naturalistic Art'.[30] But

Figure 9.5 Claude Monet, *Vineyards in the Snow, Looking towards the Mill at Orgemont*, 1873, oil on canvas, 58.4 × 81.3 cm (23 x 32 in). Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia, Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 60.51. Reproduced with the permission of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel.

the *Amateur Photographer* warned against Impressionism as a photographic influence: 'We trust the time will never come when examples of photography will in any way resemble the "Impressions" now being exhibited by Claude Monet and others in the Goupil Gallery.'[31] Emerson took exception to the *Amateur Photographer*'s comment, rightly reading it as criticizing his own photographic theories. He backpedalled, insisting that he had 'never advocated that photography should resemble the so-called "Impressionist's" work' and quoted his own passage in *Naturalistic Photography*: 'We think the work of many of the so-called modern "impressionists" but a passing craze'.[32]

There were two other pieces on the Monet exhibition in the photographic press. The *Photographic News* excerpted Joseph Pennell's notice in the *Star*, which argued for a proper recognition of Monet's artistic capabilities and cited Julia Margaret Cameron's photographs as evidence of photography's own artistic means.[33] *The Camera* discussed Monet's Goupil canvases in a review of Emerson's *Naturalistic Photography*, disparaging Emerson's aesthetic as akin to Monet's pictures.[34] It condemned the lack of definition in Monet's paintings and interpreted Emerson's principles as suggesting that photographers should 'imitate the works of these Impressionists by making their photographs fuzzy, and destitute of all detail'.[35] This equation of Impressionism with 'fuzzy' photographs would have touched a nerve with Davison, for in 1889 he had exhibited four pinhole photographs at the annual exhibition of the Photographic Society of Great Britain (PSGB).[36] The *Daily Telegraph* praised the pictures as 'soft,

impressionist work caught through a pinhole, without the intervention of a lens'.[37] But Emerson criticized Davison's pinhole images for showing an overall diffusion rather than the differential focus that Emerson advocated.[38]

Davison's *Old Farmstead*

Six months later, Davison admitted that 'considerable courage' was required to embrace the optical effect of pinhole photography: 'It is felt to be an experiment and a casting off from anchor; it is like an unsettling of religious convictions.' The phrase 'religious convictions' might have been a jab at Emerson, who treated doubters of his Naturalistic photography as heretics. But Davison was emboldened by the example of painters: 'Every artist who has learned to see and who catches the true spirit and life of nature leaves at some time minute superficial imitation, and paints broadly.'[39] That autumn, he suggested an equivalent photographic approach to this broadly painted style, asserting that the photographer could use diffused focus to represent the effects of Impressionist painting. Just as the painters 'use a broad treatment in order to drop out the commonplace and to ensure seizing the spirit and character of the subject … for this same purpose treatment of focus is the photographer's only means, and this to me is the great and leading application of the function'.[40] Accordingly, he showed another pinhole photograph, *An Old Farmstead* (Figure 9.1), at the 1890 Photographic Society of Great Britain exhibition.[41] It was a more radically soft-focus image, but it won a medal and was favourably reviewed. The *Times* praised it alongside another Davison photograph: 'Perhaps no more beautiful landscapes have ever been produced by photographic methods.'[42] This positive notice contrasted with the qualified acceptance of Impressionist painting in the general press, and it was certainly a more generous reception than was granted by some of Davison's photographic peers. The Scottish photographer Andrew Pringle declared that

> If I were to see in nature a view as blurred as Mr Davison's 'Homestead' [*sic*] … I should instantly go to an oculist. If I ever caught myself viewing nature as I view it in some other pictures – by the naturalistic school of painting or of photography – I should betake myself to an asylum or the nearest tree.[43]

Davison's photograph may have been blurred, but it was hardly unreadable. The composition is organized into distinct layers of contrasting tone in which the expanse of the field is capped by dark trees and farm buildings. These horizontals are set off by the vertical onion stalks, whose visual prominence would lead Davison to retitle the photograph 'The Onion Field' in 1898.

Like blurred focus, Impressionist painting was a visual challenge, for it was difficult to resolve the rough application of paint into a coherent picture. In 1889, *The Artist* explained that Monet's paintings should be viewed from a distance to 'produce the effect intended'; at close hand, they were 'as fine an example of direct brushwork as could be wished, but unintelligible except to experts'.[44] The same approach was recommended for resolving Davison's pinhole photographs, as the *Times* explained in 1890: 'Looked at from a suitable distance, the picture [*An Old Farmstead*] gives a wonderfully true

rendering of the subject, combining in large proportions the broad effect resulting from skillful artistic treatment with the actual truth in detail of a photograph.'[45] But the *British Journal of Photography* disliked the out-of-focus effect: 'The first sensation of disturbance to the vision is very trying, and increases in intensity whether the picture is seen from a distance or otherwise.'[46]

Naturalism and Impressionism: Defining terms

To some critics, the visual effects of pinhole photography and Impressionist painting were unnatural, and Emerson thought them un-naturalistic. Yet Davison and others aligned Impressionism and Naturalism. In his 'Impressionism' lecture, Davison acknowledged that the new school of painters 'have variously been called impressionist, naturalist, and the like'.[47] This conflation of Impressionism and Naturalism was common. Indeed, French Impressionist painting was founded on Naturalism, itself the extension of a longstanding artistic commitment to *plein-air* painting.[48] In 1889, *The Camera* connected Monet's work to Emerson's thesis in *Naturalistic Photography* by declaring that 'it is this impressionism, or Naturalism, that Dr. Emerson urges upon photographers for their worship and imitation'.[49] But Emerson disentangled those terms in his book, explaining that while 'Impressionism means the same thing as naturalism', he preferred the latter, in which the work of art 'can always be referred to a standard – Nature'. For Emerson, nature constituted an objective standard, whereas Impressionism was founded on subjectivity: 'The painter can always claim that he sees so much, and only so much, of Nature; and each individual painter becomes a standard for himself and others.'[50] As Emerson implied, there were equivalences between Naturalistic and Impressionist strategies for representing the artist's visual experience. But the approaches differed in the extent to which the picture expressed the artist's visual 'sensation' or the subjective 'impression' of the natural scene – the first deferring to optic objectivity and the latter to individual perception. In 1890, Davison gave an example of how the 'impression' operated: 'The artist does not paint the actual tree in the landscape, he paints his impression of it. His impression may be different from another's, but both may yet be considered true.'[51]

Emerson rejected Impressionism, and, following Davison's lecture, he also disavowed Naturalism, declaring, 'I am for the present and future neither idealist, realist, naturalist, nor impressionist – *photographic impressionist* indeed!', and footnoting 'photographic impressionist' as 'a term consecrate[d] [*sic*] to Charlatans'.[52] His damning words were included in 'The Death of Naturalistic Photography', which he printed as a pamphlet at the end of December 1890 and submitted to the photographic press for publication in January 1891. Emerson's 'renunciation' was, crucially, a rejection of nature's primacy as the foundation of art. It also encompassed other issues, one of which was asserting himself over Davison: 'At the Society of Arts the other day, a paper was read by Mr Davison – an amateur without training, and with superficial knowledge – in which my *old* ideas were freely and impudently handed about, and no credit given me.'[53] Davison had indeed quoted Emerson, but the American poet and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–82), not his second cousin Peter Henry.[54]

The photographic press covered the row, though it concentrated on Emerson, who was always a fertile and entertaining source of controversy. Apart from Emerson, the most pointed criticism of Davison's ideas came from the artist and critic Joseph Pennell in an 1891 Camera Club debate on artistic photography. Although his contribution was at Davison's invitation, Pennell did not mince his words. He insisted that 'the work of men like Monet in landscape, of [Edgar] Degas, and [James McNeill] Whistler, and [John Singer] Sargent in figures and portraiture' represented 'a phase of art which is quite outside any photographic possibilities'.[55] And he entirely discounted photographers' opportunities for artistic expression: 'You look and see something in nature which is fine, and then you expect a machine to show you the same thing – a machine with no sense or feeling, a machine which does not even receive the impression of objects in the same proportions as you do.'[56] In an ensuing discussion, he claimed that the photographers were disingenuous, or certainly naive, in co-opting contemporary ideas in art:

> You say you are impressionists, and give your impressions. To us it seems as if you do not. You take your camera, go out to nature, and say, 'Here is a very fine thing.' You trot out your camera, put your head in a black bag, all of which gives you a very different idea of nature to that you got looking at her with the eye.[57]

Pennell's interventions raised hackles and a round of position papers. The noise eventually subsided, and Pennell continued to turn up at Camera Club meetings and dinners to spar with the photographers.

Davison expanded on his thesis in 1893, explaining that while 'Impressionist pictures may be personal, just as every art work or impression is more or less personal', the works were not esoteric: 'Their truth of effect pleases a great number.' His examples came from contemporary paintings: 'Maybe it is an effect of shimmering air and sunlight upon a haystack … or the glare, flare, and movement of a theatre stage scene.'[58] Davison could have seen such works at the New English Art Club: one of Monet's 'Haystacks' canvases was included in the New English Art Club's 1893 exhibition, and Walter Sickert's music hall interiors were exhibited at the NEAC in 1888, 1889 and 1892.[59] In 1893, Monet was still getting negative reviews in the general press, whose readers favoured the Royal Academy's middlebrow exhibitions.[60] Impressionism fared better in the photographic press, notably in periodicals like *Amateur Photographer*, *Photography* and *Journal of the Camera Club*, which counted Davison and fellow progressives as contributors. In 1895, the *Journal of the Camera Club* hailed Monet as 'the great impressionist', whose pictures gave 'the illusion of brilliant sunlight, the sparkle of snow, the colours seen by a trained eye under different aspects of light … truly the illusion is very perfect and very wonderful'.[61]

Davison's 'Impressionism' lecture was an important early step in the acceptance of Impressionism as relevant to Photographic art. Its effect–and effects–were internalized within Pictorialism, a movement that owed much to Davison and his peers at the Camera Club, for the Club was the incubator of the Linked Ring Brotherhood, founded in 1892.[62] These influences extended across the Atlantic: Alfred Stieglitz joined both

the Camera Club and the Linked Ring in 1894 and tapped into that cohort for his journals *Camera Notes* (from 1897) and *Camera Work* (from 1903). The circle was completed in 1907, when *Camera Work* published eight George Davison photographs, including *An Old Farmstead*.[63]

Notes

1 George Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', lecture, Society of Arts, London, 17 December 1890, published in *British Journal of Photography* 37, no. 1599 (26 December 1890): 821–4; see also 824–6. Davison was the Secretary of London's Camera Club, an association of 'amateur' (non-commercial) photographers set up in 1885 as a reformist alternative to the Photographic Society of Great Britain.

2 The Society of Arts, London [The Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce] hosted London's first public photographic exhibition in December 1852 and the inaugural meetings of the Photographic Society of London in 1853.

3 Davison's lecture was also printed in the *Photographic News*, *The Camera* and *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture*.

4 Margaret Harker identified Davison as an important protagonist and briefly summarized his lecture, but did not discuss his understanding of Impressionist theory or its art historical context. Margaret Harker, *The Linked Ring: The Secession in Photography 1892–1910* (London: Heinemann, 1979), 31–2.

5 See Aaron Scharf, *Art and Photography* (London: Allen Lane, 1968), 131, 133, 136; Phillip Prodger et. al., *Impressionist Camera. Pictorial Photography in Europe, 1888–1918* (London and New York: Merrill for the St Louis Art Museum, 2006), 1, 17, 68, 139; Françoise Heilbrun, 'Impressionism and Photography', *History of Photography* 33, no. 1 (February 2009): 18–25.

6 Kirk Varnedoe challenged Scharf's assertion of a photographic influence on impressionist painters' formal strategies in 'The Artifice of Candor: Impressionism and Photography Revisited', *Art in America* 68, no. 1 (Winter 1980): 487–98, and 'The Ideology of Time: Degas and Photography', *Art in America* 68, no. 6 (Summer 1980): 96–110.

7 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 821.

8 Ibid., 822.

9 Ibid., 823.

10 Ibid., 822.

11 Francis Bate, *The Naturalistic School of Painting* (London: The Artist, 1887). Bate's text first appeared as seven articles in *The Artist and Journal of Home Culture* 7, nos. 75–82, March to September 1886.

12 The NEAC's French inspirations included the painters Jean-François Millet and Jules Bastien-Lepage, the latter of whom led the emerging Naturalist movement from the late 1870s.

13 Bate, *The Naturalistic School of Painting* (1887), 27.

14 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 822.

15 P. H. Emerson, *Naturalistic Photography for Students of the Art* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1889), 91. Emerson did not name the artists, but they included the NEAC painter Thomas Frederick Goodall, whom he had met in 1885. Goodall introduced him to other NEAC artists, including George Clausen and Henry La Thangue.

16 Although Bate's articles in *The Artist* predated *Naturalistic Photography* by three years, Emerson insisted that Bate adopted his ideas (and title), a charge that Bate denied. See 'Dr. Emerson's Renunciation of Naturalistic Photography', *Photographic News* 35, no. 1690 (23 January 1891): 63. Bate replied in letters to the editors of the *Photographic News*, *The Camera* and *The Artist*.

17 The photographic press reviewed NEAC exhibitions in 1886, 1887, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893 and 1894.

18 'Our Views', *Amateur Photographer* 3, no. 85 (21 May 1886): 242.

19 I am indebted to Thomas Goodall's descendants for information on Goodall's 1886 submission, *The Last Load*.

20 'Our Views', *Amateur Photographer*, 1886, 242.

21 Thomas Goodall's descendants provided valuable information about comparative paintings and the artist's working locale.

22 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 822.

23 Apart from the Goupil Gallery, Monet's London showings from 1870 onwards were in group exhibitions.

24 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 822. *Marine – Tempest*, also known as *A Freshening Breeze* (1866), was No. XII, Goupil Gallery, London, 1889. See Frances Fowle, 'Making Money Out of Monet: Marketing Monet in Britain 1870–1905', in Frances Fowle (ed.), *Monet and French Landscape: Vétheuil and Normandy* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2006), 149, 123. *Le Moulin d'Orgemont* (1873) was No. XVI, Goupil Gallery, London, 1889. See catalogue number 254 in Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet*, *Complete Paintings: Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. 2 (Köln: Benedikt Taschen; Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 1996), 110.

25 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 821.

26 Chesneau praised the first group exhibition of the painters who would become known as the Impressionists in three articles in *Paris-Journal* (2 April, 7 May and 9 May 1874). French texts reprinted in *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886. Documentation. Volume 1: Reviews*, ed. Ruth Berson, vol. 1 (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1996), 17–20.

27 Ibid., 821. In his lecture, Davison erroneously called Chesneau 'De Chesneau'.

28 Ernest Chesneau, 'Art and Nature' in *The Education of the Artist* (1880), trans. Clara Bell (London: Cassell & Co., 1886), 217.

29 Ibid., 216.

30 P. H. Emerson, 'Naturalistic Art', in 'Correspondence', *Photographic News* 33, no. 1601 (10 May 1889): 316. Emerson also recommended works by Camille Corot at the Goupil, John Singer Sargent at the New English Art Club and Thomas Goodall at the Royal Academy.

31 'Our Views', *Amateur Photographer* 9, no. 241 (17 May 1889): 319. The comment preceded various letters to the Editor about Emerson's *Naturalistic Photography*.

32 The 'so-called "Impressionist"' was Monet. P. H. Emerson, 'Dr. Emerson's "Naturalistic Photography"', *Photographic News* 33, no. 1605 (7 June 1889): 381. Emerson quoted *Naturalistic Photography*, 22.

33 Unsigned review [Joseph Pennell], 'The "Star" on Impressionism in Photography', *Photographic News* 33, no. 1600 (3 May 1889): 304. The full *Star* review described Monet's canvases as 'pictures in their most complete sense; if you cannot see pictures in them you are artless; it is not the fault of the painter, it is your own'. 'Artist Unknown' [pseudonym for Joseph Pennell], 'Impressionism in Painting and Photography – Some Bond-street Shows', *The Star*, no. 396 (29 April 1889): 2.

34 Unsigned review, 'Impressionism and Photography. Dr. Emerson's New Book', *The Camera* 3, no. 36 (1 May 1889): 295. Davison would have seen the review, for his own article on photographic societies directly preceded it; his final paragraphs shared the page with the beginning of the review. See George Davison, 'Our Photographic Societies: Their Growth and Work', *The Camera* 3, no. 36 (1 May 1889): 292–5.

35 'Impressionism and Photography. Dr. Emerson's New Book', *The Camera*, 296.

36 Davison, 'Pinhole Pictures', *Photography* 1, no. 21 (4 April 1889): 240. He had first exhibited a pinhole photograph, *A Sussex Landscape*, at the Photographic Society of Great Britain in 1888.

37 'Opinions of the London Daily Press on the Photographic Exhibition. *Daily Telegraph*', *British Journal of Photography* 36, no. 1535 (4 October 1889): 654.

38 P. H. Emerson, 'Dr. Emerson's "English Letter"', *Amateur Photographer* 10, no. 269 (29 November 1889): 365.

39 George Davison, 'Pictorial Focusing', *Photography* 281 (29 May 1890): 339.

40 George Davison, 'The Focus Question', *Photographic News* 34, no. 1680 (14 November 1890): 883.

41 *An Old Farmstead* was originally exhibited, in 1890, as a platinum print but that print is no longer extant.

42 'Opinions of the London Press on the Photographic Exhibition. *The Times*', *British Journal of Photography* 37, no. 1587 (3 October 1890): 632.

43 Andrew Pringle, 'Impressionism in Photography', *Photography* 3, no. 113 (8 January 1891): 22. Pringle (1850–1929) and Davison were both on the editorial board of *Photography* and on the board of directors of Kodak Ltd.

44 Unsigned review, 'Monet at the Goupil Gallery', *Artist* (1 May 1889): 147–8, in *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception*, ed. Kate Flint, 311–12.

45 'Opinions of the London Press on the Photographic Exhibition. *The Times*', 29 May 1890, 632.

46 'The Photographic Society's Exhibition', *British Journal of Photography* 37, no. 1588 (10 October 1890): 645.

47 Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 821.

48 See footnote 13 on French Naturalism. At the time, the terms 'Naturalist' and 'Naturalism' were used interchangeably.

49 'Impressionism and Photography. Dr. Emerson's New Book', 296.

50 Emerson, *Naturalistic Photography*, 22.

51 George Davison, untitled paper in reply to William Burton, 'On One or Two Tenets of the "Naturalists"', *Journal of the Camera Club* 4, no. 42 (March 1890): 66.

52 'Dr. Emerson's Renunciation of Naturalistic Photography', *Photographic News* 35, no.1690 (23 January 1891): 62. The text also appeared in the *British Journal of Photography*, *Amateur Photographer*, *The Camera* and *Photography*.

53 'Dr. Emerson's Renunciation of Naturalistic Photography', 63.

54 Davison quoted a number of lines from Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Art' (Essay 12), *Essays* (Boston: James Munroe & Co., 1841), 294. Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 822.

55 Joseph Pennell, 'Photography as a Hindrance and a Help to Art', *Journal of the Camera Club* 5, no. 57 (April 1891): 75.

56 Ibid, 75. Davison had challenged 'the widespread prejudice against photography as an essentially mechanical, harsh, and vulgar medium for anything like artistic expression'. Davison, 'Impressionism in Photography', 824.

57 Pennell, discussion following A. [Alfred] Maskell, 'The Claims of Photography to Recognition as Art', *Journal of the Camera Club* 5, no. 60 (July 1891): 150. The 'black bag' was the dark cloth used when focusing the image on the camera's glass viewing screen.

58 George Davison, 'Photography and Impressionism', *Photography* 5, no. 233 (27 April 1893): 255.

59 Walter Sickert (1860–1942) joined the NEAC in 1888, and his music hall scenes were widely reviewed in 1888 and 1889. Kenneth McConkey, *The New English: A History of the New English Art Club* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2006), 47–8, 51. For Sickert's 1892 submission, see https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/camden-town-group/walter-richard-sickert-minnie-cunningham-r1139296 (accessed 2 August 2019).

60 Unsigned review [Charles Whibley], 'New or Old?', *National Observer* (15 April 1893): 542, reprinted in *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception*, ed. Kate Flint, 312–13. In his notice of the New English Art Club exhibition, Whibley argued that Monet's art was 'the very anarchy of painting' but 'animated by a higher intention than that desire to delude the Midlands which inspires the Royal Academy'.

61 Unsigned review, 'Some Recent Picture Exhibitions', *Journal of the Camera Club* 9, no. 110 (July 1895): 129.

62 Harker, *The Linked Ring*, 82–4.

63 Davison retitled the image *The Onion Field* in 1898 and it was reproduced as a photogravure under that title in *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly* 18 (April 1907).

10

‘The Poetical Talents of Our Artists’: American Narrative Daguerreotypes

Diane Waggoner

> Composition pictures, such as Rejlander’s *Two Ways of Life* [,] have not been executed in America
>
> – Coleman Sellers, 1862

When Professor Edwin Emerson of Troy University returned to Philadelphia in 1862 from a trip to Britain, he visited with Coleman Sellers (1827–1907) and other unnamed American photographers and showed them examples of British photography, including Oscar Gustaf Rejlander’s *Two Ways of Life* (1857) and *Head of John the Baptist* (1855).[1] For the men gathered there that day, viewing Rejlander’s prints crystallized the possibilities for image-making that negative–positive photography offered. *Two Ways of Life* (Figure 10.1) presented an allegory of virtue and vice through an elaborate composition made from combining several negatives. It was a touchstone for photography in Britain, a photograph ambitious for its technique and for the scope of its subject, which capped not only Rejlander’s career but, along with Henry Peach Robinson’s work, established a genre of subject photographs. Though Sellers referred specifically to Rejlander’s technique of combining negatives, the telling of a story in a photograph was nevertheless a stark reminder of a greater lacuna in contemporary American photography. Sellers – who was firmly ensconced in Philadelphia’s artistic circles and the grandson of the artist Charles Willson Peale – was right to a degree: Rejlander’s *Two Ways of Life* was not being emulated in the United States in the early 1860s. Then, with the nation in the middle of the Civil War, few, if any, photographers attempted staged photographs. Although Sellers did not acknowledge any previous American narrative photographs, these kinds of composition pictures had briefly thrived ten years before during the heyday of the daguerreotype, though by no means a common undertaking. Some daguerreotypists adopted genre subjects, coinciding with the rise in popularity of American genre painting.[2]

These ambitious narrative pictures predated those made by Rejlander and other photographers in Britain in the collodion era and were created even before landscape coalesced as an artistic subject in American photography in the mid-1850s and

1860s.[3] The photographers who produced these narrative daguerreotypes – among them, the Meade Brothers (Charles Richard Meade (1826–58) and Henry Meade (c. 1823–65)), J. E. Mayall (1813–1901), Alexander Hesler (1823–95), George Barnard (1819–1902) and, most prominently, Gabriel Harrison (1818–1902) – had exhibited them at the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in London in 1851 and the Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations (the New York Crystal Palace) in 1853, achieving a certain level of international and national renown.[4] The subjects of their narrative daguerreotypes can be divided into three categories: allegory, religion and genre scenes of everyday American life. Absent were the literary, mythological or historical subjects that would be cultivated in Britain by Rejlander and Robinson, and by Julia Margaret Cameron in the later 1860s. These American daguerreotypes were considered unusual enough to spark commentary and opinion concerning the suitability of such subject themes in photography. Among those that were mentioned in contemporary writing, few are known to have survived today. Nonetheless, their reception offers a window onto the status and understanding of photography at a specific point in the medium's early history in America.[5]

The fleeting period in which American photographers made narrative pictures using the direct positive daguerreotype process was contemporaneous with the publication of the seminal *Photographic Art Journal* (*PAJ*). First published in 1851 and edited by Henry Hunt Snelling (1817–97), it was issued for almost a decade (its name was changed to the *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* (*PFAJ*) from 1854 to 1859). Snelling's intent was not only to instruct photographers on technical issues but also to provide education on artistic matters, as the change in the title of the journal proclaimed. The magazine regularly featured tipped in salted paper prints – some made from paper negatives and others copy prints of daguerreotypes (i.e. a daguerreotype

Figure 10.1 Oscar Rejlander, *The Two Ways of Life*, 1857 gelatin silver print by Reginald Malby, c. 1925. Image (overall): 104.1 × 200.7 cm (41 × 79 in), George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY; gift of the Royal Photographic Society, 1978.0841.0001. Reproduced with the permission of the George Eastman Museum, Rochester.

rephotographed using a paper negative and printed from the negative as a salted paper print), including some of the only surviving images of lost subject daguerreotypes – that the editor considered particularly admirable. Snelling served as a cheerleader for these efforts: commenting on the Meade Brothers' series, 'The Seven Ages of Man' (currently untraced), he wrote, 'We wish to see the exhibition of such pictures more general. It will bring out the poetical talents of our artists, as well as create a more refined taste.'[6] Snelling advocated for daguerreotypists to break away from the rut of portraiture, noting of the daguerreotypes displayed at the New York Crystal Palace that photographers 'seem content to confine themselves to the simpler and more easy branch of their art'. Instead, he felt they 'should endeavor to exhibit its [photography's] scientific and artistic applications'.[7] Snelling's praise of the photographer's 'poetical talents' highlighted early debates on the nature of photography and its legitimate artistic applications. Beyond portraiture, the production of American narrative pictures using the daguerreotype process posed questions as to whether photography could fit into the already-established hierarchy of painting; if the medium was suited to idealism in addition to realism; whether it should be considered imaginative or merely mechanical; and if staging photographs was a creative activity that should be encouraged or represented a violation of the much vaunted empirical regime of photographic visuality.

Allegory

Photographers embarking on allegorical subjects in photography challenged the idea that the medium by definition recorded the visible world without the intervention of the human hand, an interpretation found in most of the earliest American accounts of photography.[8] But in the medium's exploratory first decade and a half, a small number of photographers took up this challenge. Again, few of these allegorical daguerreotypes have been traced, but more titles are known from references in publications. Known, but not extant, daguerreotypes included the Meade Brothers' series of the 'Four Quarters of the World' and Mayall's 'The Lord's Prayer, in a Series of Ten Designs (from Life)', both displayed in the American section of the Great Exhibition and described at some length in published reports on the display. The 'Four Quarters of the World' presented 'Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The first represented by a beautiful group, surrounded by the arts, the second by an Asiatic in costume, on a divan, cross-legged, with pipe, etc., the third by two negroes naked, excepting a tunic from the waist to the knees, the fourth by a group of Indians. They have been much admired, and have attracted the attention of all true lovers of art.'[9] The *Reports by the Juries* described Mayall's ten 'Lord's Prayer' pictures as 'verging upon the theatrical in point of style' but singled out 'a small figure of a female reclining: it is exquisite in delicacy of execution, harmonious distribution of light and shade, whilst an admirable tone pervades the whole picture; this, the finest of Mr. Mayall's contributions, is free from colour, and is daguerreotyped from a classic work of art'.[10] The description implies he modelled his composition on a specific, but unidentified, religious painting. Mayall was a British-born photographer who practised for a few years in Philadelphia, and who exhibited

with both the British and American contingents.[11] He produced this series in America, drawing upon the 'most beautiful and talented ladies of Philadelphia … to embody the precepts of this Divine Prayer',[12] indicating more clearly that Mayall had society ladies serving as his models. Based on these written descriptions the Meades and Mayall adopted traditional modes of allegory, employing either ethnic character types or female models to personify meaning.

One major allegorical picture that has survived as a copy paper print is Gabriel Harrison's daguerreotype, *Past, Present, and Future*, though it was sometimes attributed to his then employer, Martin Lawrence (Figure 10.2). Several pictures by Harrison were exhibited under Lawrence's name at the Great Exhibition and the New York Crystal Palace, earning bronze medals in both and praise from critics.[13] In March 1851, the *PAJ* published a lengthy biographical account of Harrison, extolling his 'great advantage over most of the operators' due to his artistic family background and work as a painter. The son and grandson of banknote engravers, he grew up in an artistic and literary Philadelphia household. S. J. Burr, the writer, claimed Harrison was the first to produce what he called '*descriptive daguerreotypes* – that is – put poetry in types as well as in pictures'. He opined that most photographers approached the medium as 'merely a mechanical and chemical operation; seldom experimenting upon graceful position, bold folds in drapery or proper tone to pictures'. Harrison, in contrast, threw himself into studying works of art and 'conceived the delightful idea of throwing a portrait into a finished picture' and after 'a proper study of drapery, was to change the usual cold, frosty tone (so common in ordinary daguerreotypes,) in order to produce decidedly those three tints positive, high lights, middle tint, and shadow; without which no painting, drawing or daguerreotype can be considered good'.[14]

Burr lauded *Past, Present, and Future* as one of Harrison's most admired daguerreotypes, drawing particular attention to the expressiveness of the subject: 'Artists and poets have been lavish in the commendation of this exquisite picture, and so delighted have they been with his beautiful fancy sketches in daguerreotype, that he is now almost universally known as the *Poet Daguerreian*.'[15] Harrison himself emphasized his subjects' artistic precedents, stating in 1851 that

> I would not be understood as placing the Daguerrian on a par with the painter or sculptor, but most *emphatically* I will say, that our art is the hand-maid to those higher branches of the fine arts, and who will dare to say, we cannot compose and put poetry in our types as well as the painter in his sketch book; or that we cannot have representatives of Faith, Hope, and Charity, as well as *Sir J. Reynolds*; a *Holy Family* as well as a *Murillo*; or the Infant Saviour, with cross and lamb, as well as *Raphael*.[16]

Harrison's photograph of three women carries many artistic echoes. The trio resonates with his own mention of the Christian theological virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity, as well as the classical Three Graces and draws on the Greek Horae, or Hours, also personified as three women. His composition bears a marked similarity to Samuel

Figure 10.2 Gabriel Harrison, *Past, Present, and Future*, c. 1851, salted paper print by J. A. Whipple of a daguerreotype by Harrison, 20 × 14.9 cm (7 ⅞ × 5 ⅞ in). Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

Shelley's 1801 miniature, *The Horae, Eumonia, Dice, and Irene; or the Past, the Present and the Coming Hour* (The Providence Athenaeum), which was exhibited at the Royal Academy and subsequently engraved and used as a frontispiece for an edition of Thomas Gray's poem, 'Ode to Spring'. Bostonian Edward Greene Malbone made a copy miniature of Shelley's work in the early 1800s, which was acquired by the Providence Athenaeum in 1854. Malbone had travelled to London with the Boston-based painter, Washington Allston, whom Burr described as a source of study for Harrison, so it is very likely that Harrison knew one or both of these precursors. Harrison followed the miniaturists' precedents. Though appearing of similar ages the three women personify the different periods of time by their orientation in different directions. Any further symbolism is somewhat obscure, but the daguerreotype received praise for its skilled, balanced composition. The copy paper print reveals that Harrison posed his models in a studio and achieved an even lighting across his subjects. Trading on female beauty, its allegorical concept was simple and straightforward with an appearance not overtly theatrical, as suggested of Mayall's photograph, and more akin to a portrait daguerreotype. However, though it was exhibited multiple times and circulated via the copy paper print in the *PFAJ*, it did not inspire other daguerreotypists to adopt similar, fanciful subjects.

Religion

Beginning in 1851 the Anthony Prize Competition was the most significant attempt to foster artistic compositions among daguerreotypists. Sponsored by Edward T. Anthony, one of the earliest commercial photographers, who operated a prominent studio in New York, the competition was covered with much fanfare in the *PFAJ* and the other important photography magazine of the time, *Humphrey's Journal*.[17] Announced with the offer of a $500 prize, the Competition took place in 1853, when the prize money was used to create a silver pitcher for the award.[18] Each entrant was asked to submit four daguerreotypes, in sizes from quarter to whole plate. The Competition was open to international contestants, but of the ten competitors, all were American: Harrison, Hesler, Barnard, Jeremiah Gurney, Samuel Root, George K. Warren, James Brown, Samuel Masury and George Silsbee, Preston M. Cary, and Joel E. Whitney. The panel of judges consisted of Samuel F. B. Morse, John W. Draper and James Renwick, men deeply involved with photography in the 1840s. Morse and Draper had been pioneering American daguerreotypists though they were no longer practising in 1853, while Renwick, a professor at Columbia University, had commissioned Anthony to accompany him as a photographer on the 1840 Northeast Boundary Survey. The competition was judged blindly: the top prize went to Gurney and the second to Root, each prize awarded, as the competition had announced, to 'that daguerreotypist whose four daguerreotypes, collectively, should be considered by the judges to be the best average pictures'.[19]

The low number of entrants and preponderance of portraits disappointed the organizers, even including the winning portraits by Gurney and Root. Of the forty

daguerreotypes submitted Harrison's four daguerreotypes and one by Barnard merited special mention in the *PFAJ's* write-up on the competition results. While the portraits were 'a class of pictures rendered more easy to perfect, on account of the continued practice, and consequently apt experience of the manipulator', Snelling praised

> the man who can step aside from the beaten track, and produce an artistic composition, worthy of honorable mention, superior to him who can simply produce a perfect portrait, just in proportion as that composition is more difficult and artistic. The two daguerreotypes just alluded to, the 'Infant Saviour', by Gabriel Harrison, of Brooklyn, L.I., and the 'Woodsawyer's Nooning', by Geo. N. Barnard, of Oswego, N.Y., the latter of which is almost perfect.[20]

Barnard's picture is now known because it was reproduced as a copy salted paper print in the same issue of the *PFAJ* (Figure 10.3), while Harrison's *The Infant Saviour Bearing the Cross* is still extant (Figure 10.4). Harrison's three other entries included another religious subject, *Mary Magdalene*, and two more allegories in the manner of *Past, Present, and Future*, *Young America* and *Helia, or the Genius of Daguerreotyping*.[21] In

Figure 10.3 George N. Barnard, *Woodsawyers' Nooning*, c. 1853, salted paper print by J. A. Whipple, 1853, of a daguerreotype by Barnard, 18.1 × 20.8 cm (7 ⅛ × 8 $^{3}/_{16}$ in). Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

Figure 10.4 Gabriel Harrison, *The Infant Saviour Bearing the Cross*, c. 1850, daguerreotype. Image (overall): 16.5 × 14.2 cm. George Eastman Museum, Rochester, NY, gift of Clara L. Harrison. Reproduced with the permission of the George Eastman Museum.

the published report, the judges singled out both Harrison and Barnard for their 'well composed' pictures.[22]

The religious subjects of Harrison – and the lost Lord's Prayer series by Mayall – were unprecedented in photography. Not until Rejlander's *Head of John the Baptist* and Cameron's Madonna and Child photography in the mid-1860s in Britain were

Christian subjects to appear again in photography and to some controversy. But there is no evidence from the early 1850s to suggest there was any objection in America to the embrace of such subject matter. As noted above, Harrison's Anthony Prize entries included the now untraced *Mary Magdalene* and his honourable mention, *Infant Saviour*. The *Infant Saviour* is a remarkable daguerreotype, evoking both painting and theatre in Harrison's use of dramatic lighting, the striking diagonal of the cross, the artfully arranged drape and the uplifted eyes of the sitter, Harrison's son.[23] Harrison provided a particularly lengthy statement on his daguerreotype, as requested of the contestants, detailing all the many steps he took to ensure a successful and high-quality polished plate. He again emphasizes his knowledge of art: 'This superb ideal picture of the "Saviour of the World," is taken after the style of the old masters, and is equal to the richest engraving ever issued in mezzotint …. The anatomical correctness of form is beautifully preserved in the daguerreotype, and as a picture, is well calculated to excite the admiration and awe of those who love the ideal, and can appreciate a work of excellence.'[24] Harrison calls upon accepted traditions of religious imagery in painting, claiming 'idealism' for photography. He even suggests, as Rejlander would a few years later, that the photographer improves upon the painter because of the photograph's 'anatomical correctness'. That he compared the daguerreotype specifically to a mezzotint engraving rather than a painting calls attention to the monochrome nature of both media and their smaller size suitable for circulation. *Infant Saviour*, nevertheless, must have remained in Harrison's possession, because it was given to the George Eastman Museum by a descendant.

Harrison's colourful life included a career as an actor and painter in addition to photographer. During the 1850s, he simultaneously worked as a photographer and actor-producer, founding the Brooklyn Dramatic Academy in 1851 and continuing to be involved in several theatres for the next decades. The ease with which Harrison moved between painting, photography and the theatre placed him in a unique position among photographers to advocate, through his daguerreotypes, that imaginative subjects – even the most idealized drawn from religion – should be the province of photography. However, despite the praise given to the *Infant Saviour*, it, as with *Past, Present, and Future*, did not attract any imitators, and Harrison's own output in this model was limited.

Genre

Unlike the allegorical and religious scenes of Harrison and others, which were explicitly linked to the European visual tradition, daguerreotypists' genre scenes focused on uniquely American subjects. Harrison, again, was the leader, producing a genre scene as early as the mid-1840s of his son (who later modelled for *Young America* and the *Infant Saviour*) clinging to a bust of George Washington, which won a prize at an 1845 Washington, DC fair.[25] In his daguerreotype, *California News*, Harrison takes on another distinctively American subject, showing himself posing with his employer, Martin Lawrence, Lawrence's son and another man, as if hearing news of the California gold rush (Figure 10.5). His composition clearly looked to the 1850 painting of the

Figure 10.5 Gabriel Harrison, *California News*, c. 1850, daguerreotype, plate: 14 × 10.5 cm (5 ½ × 4 ⅛ in). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gilman Collection, Purchase, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation Gift, through Joyce and Robert Menschel, 2005. Creative Commons.

same name (Figure 10.6) by William Sidney Mount, the most prominent American genre painter. Mount's scene is placed in a post office where an advertisement on the wall announces a ship sailing to San Francisco. Figures from many classes of society congregate, including a young white woman and a Black man. Harrison was surely also familiar with Richard Caton Woodville's 1848 *War News from Mexico* (Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art), which presents a group of Americans from different classes and races gathered around a newspaper. Harrison too portrays his sitters grouped around one person eagerly reading the news, though his composition is simpler, showing only four white male figures, who all apparently belong to the same socio-economic class. While Harrison does not convey a sense that the listeners may themselves be preparing to embark west to seek their fortunes, he, as the central figure in a top hat, and the other models suggest a sense of palpable excitement at hearing the news. He draws on his experience as an actor to use the daguerreotype medium theatrically, conjuring the atmosphere of the young nation's robust public sphere, as did the contemporaneous paintings. And though the scenery and props featured in the paintings are absent, Harrison's daguerreotype is nevertheless theatrical, relying on the performances of his models.

Barnard's entry for the 1853 Anthony Prize Pitcher was also a serious attempt at a genre picture, capturing a scene of everyday life: a Canadian wood-sawyer with his son eating their noon meal, made in his studio at Oswego, New York (Figure 10.3). The statement Barnard furnished on his entry came from an unidentified friend, who

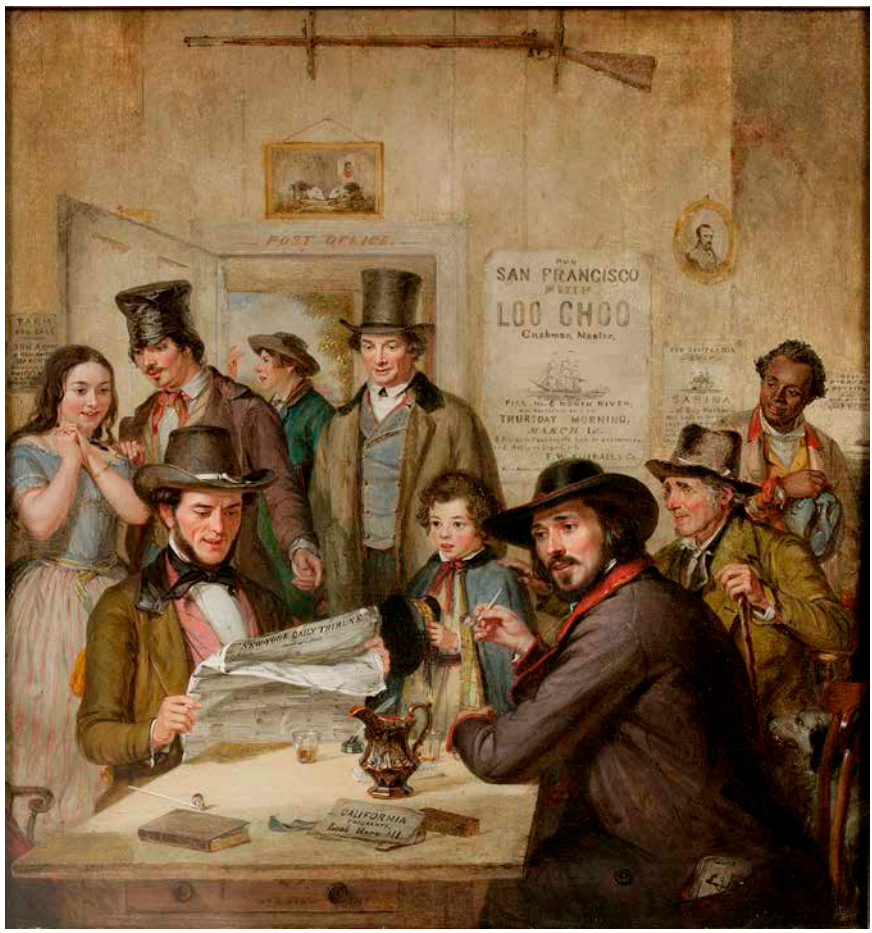

Figure 10.6 William Sidney Mount, *California News*, 1850, oil on canvas, 21 ½ × 20 ¼ in. Gift of Mr and Mrs Ward Melville, 1955. © The Long Island Museum.

noted how unusual a subject it was for a daguerreotype, showing 'more of life and spirit, and a stricter attention to artistic rules'. The writer describes:

> The chief beauty of the picture is the boy; his languid, over-worked air, his indifference to the allurements of the table plainly indicate that he is in that state of physical suffering which all of us as boys have realized, that of being *too tired to eat*. His intelligent, reflective face, while looking directly in your eye, betokens by its abstracted air that his thoughts are absent …. His frank and manly countenance indicate his nature, and who knows but the boy of the wood-sawyer before us, may yet be a brilliant star in the constellation of his country's glory.[26]

The friend's description was in line with art criticism of the day. The author did not focus on Barnard's staging of the scene but on the successful communication of story and emotion between the two sitters. The elaborate imagining of the interior life of the boy espouses the American ideal of meritocracy: despite his humble beginnings, he may eventually grow up to become a prominent member of society. Barnard's composition and the friend's remarks testify to their visual literacy and shared set of values and tastes of the exact sort that Snelling hoped to nurture through his writing in the *PAJ*. Echoing contemporary genre paintings, like those of Mount, Barnard emphasized the dignity of labour, upholding myths of American types, from the Yankee to the frontiersman. This emphasis on American characters was a more elaborate version of 'occupational' daguerreotypes (also known as *petits métiers*), which were produced in far greater numbers than genre scenes and consisted of portraits of people, usually men, dressed in their work clothes with some sort of emblem of their employment. As Keith Davis suggests, moreover, the choice of a woodsawyer not only emphasized the American ideal of progress and industry, but also struck a nostalgic note for a pre-industrial past; the recognition that deforestation was devastating the landscape had already crept into American discourse by the 1850s.[27] Thomas Cole's seminal 1836 'Essay on American Scenery' lamented the 'ravages of the axe' and could not help but be brought to mind by Barnard's choice of subject fifteen years later.[28]

Hesler was also a contestant for the Anthony Prize Pitcher, though he evidently only entered portraits. Yet his practice was much more versatile, and, along with Harrison, he was one of the most prominent makers of genre scenes.[29] At the New York Crystal Palace, he exhibited several: *Driving a Bargain*, *The Toilet*, *The Three Pets*, *Asking a Favor*, *Granted*, *Expectation* and *Almost Accepted*.[30] Quoting from the *Daily Advertiser*, Snelling concurred that 'all appeared so real and so spirited, that it seems difficult to believe they were not *real life* in miniature forms. In the execution of these pictures the artist has endeavored to portray character as well as form, and we are sure that no pencil could at all equal the happy and striking results at which he has arrived.'

Driving a Bargain, only known from its copy salted paper print in the *PFAJ*, was taken in Hesler's studio in Galena, Illinois (Figure 10.7). A white blacksmith named Park poses with the tools of his trade in discussion with a Black boy, who attempts to make the titular bargain by selling a horseshoe. Similar to Barnard's *Woodsawyer's Nooning*, Hesler's picture focuses on labour. The blacksmith was vividly described in the *PFAJ* as the 'class of persons commonly known as a real *live yankee*–one fully ripe and always ready for whatever might turn up'. The article provides a biography of Park: born in 1813 in Massachusetts, he apprenticed as a smith, but 'not finding himself hardly smart enough for the times', enrolled at Marion College before moving to Galena and setting up a smithing business. Hesler,

> seeing in him a fit emblem of the powerful West, conceived the happy idea of embodying it in a picture for the then approaching Worlds Fair – and thus so combined the parts as at once to represent the youth, the strength and the enterprise and intelligence of the mighty West…. In the boy with the horse-shoe (which he is striving to sell) we have the youth and enterprise; and in muscular man and hardy employment, we have the strength of a nation.

Figure 10.7 Alexander Hesler, *Driving a Bargain*, c. 1853, salted paper print by J. A. Whipple of a daguerreotype, 1854. 19.8 × 14.8 cm (7 13/16 × 5 13/16 in). Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

However, the author continues by noting the difficulties of making such pictures, because the photographer has to confront '*real stubborn* life objects'. Recounting Hesler's difficulties with the mother of the boy, the author writes that she

> had no sooner heard what had been done, than she immediately repaired to the shop and thence to the gallery to find 'the villains' who 'would dare to "*draw*" her son, as he was in dirt and rags'. If he was wanted to be *drawed* she should have been notified, so that she might have dressed him up for the occasion. It required some skill besides the promise of a picture all dressed up and with a clean face, to appease her anger.[31]

Though written as a humorous anecdote of Hesler's artistic travails, the writer perpetuates racial stereotypes common at the time. The exchange with the boy's mother reads poignantly by highlighting her instinct that a photograph of her son should represent him as she chooses to present him publicly, at his best, 'dressed up for the occasion', rather than fit into a character type as the artist perceived him without her consent. As highlighted by the article's description, Hesler's evocation of powerful tropes regarding race is overt in his composition. Barnard's white boy was characterized as America's future, while Hesler's Black boy, though described as 'youth and enterprise', was dressed deliberately in 'dirt and rags'. As for the men, both the woodsawyer and the blacksmith were types associated with the rural, agricultural backbone championed by Thomas Jefferson in the country's earliest decades. Yet they were also plucky individual tradesman on the rise in the increasingly urban, mercantile nation as envisioned by the presidency of Andrew Jackson.

It is significant that of the three categories of imaginative composition, the scene of everyday life that drew upon the tropes of contemporaneous genre painting, with its denotation of American types, such as the 'live Yankee', was the narrative subject most commonly undertaken by these photographers. On its face, this was the genre most closely allied with the documentary ability of photography and felt distinctively American, in accord with the pride that American daguerreotypists took in their acknowledged skill in the medium. In the descriptions of these daguerreotypes, the word 'real' appears repeatedly. In the end, though these narrative daguerreotypes were praised and discussed, they did not broadly catch on. Photographers themselves were up-and-coming businessmen, as Harrison posed himself and Lawrence in *California News*, who exhibited their pictures in the urban centres of New York, Philadelphia or London. A market for these kinds of pictures did not apparently materialize, despite Snelling's encouragement, which inevitably must have discouraged photographers. The allegorical, religious and genre scenes of Harrison, Hesler, Barnard and others, which relied upon the use of models to act out situations and emotions, trod the fine line between successful realization and the charge of a pejorative theatricality. The perilous nature of this distinction is suggested by a series of daguerreotypes made privately in 1853.

Theatricality

Montgomery P. Simons (c. 1816–77), a prominent daguerreotypist who first established a reputation in Philadelphia for the high quality of his portraiture, made the most unique surviving group of subject pictures executed in America. While working in Richmond, Virginia, Simons met Mann Satterwaite Valentine II (1824–92), a young man with artistic interests, who later made a fortune manufacturing and selling Valentine's Meat Juice. Drawing on Charles Le Brun's seventeenth-century treatise on the expression of the passions in the human face, he commissioned Simons to make close to thirty daguerreotypes of himself, his brother, William Winston Valentine, and an artist friend, William James Hubard, portraying different emotions. Simons's series, all made on the same day on 2 January, remained in Valentine's possession until he bequeathed them to the Valentine Museum in Richmond, which he founded just before his death in 1893.

Valentine kept a diary, and a few days before the sitting, he noted that Hubard 'has been engaged the past week or ten days in some strong work for my pursuits in metaphysics, physiognomy. Desiring to possess myself of a key to the passions, he has fallen upon a beautiful system of illustrating them'.[32] A sheaf of papers among Valentine's possessions bear written captions quoting from Le Brun but illustrations seem not to have materialized.[33] Instead, Valentine and his partners made daguerreotypes, though it is not clear whether they considered the photographs an end in themselves or if they saw them as studies to aid Hubard in making illustrations. Valentine also inscribed a list of the passions that he and his friends chose to model on the day, asking, 'What excites these passions?' and following with his 'key', which included emotions ranging from love and virtue to passions, such as rage, remorse, hate, desire, melancholy, folly, and finally madness and idiocy.[34] Unfortunately, none of the daguerreotypes were labelled with the corresponding passion, so the emotions illustrated by each picture are not always certain.

The three men changed their attire for each portrait: in some, they are clad simply in white shirts, while in others they drape themselves with a gingham or a solid heavy cloth to help express the emotion. For example, the silly look of the gingham cloth wrapped around Valentine's head may be employed to convey folly or idiocy. Most of the portraits are taken from the waist up or are bust-length, though, in one, Valentine stands unclothed, with the gingham cloth tied around him as a loincloth. Each one was evidently carefully planned, with hair arranged differently (sometimes neatly, sometimes mussed), the shirt either buttoned or loosened at the collar – to convey either positive or negative emotions. In some, the emotions are expressed solely by the face, in others hand gestures are used. In one, Valentine squints his eyes and bares his teeth, his rumpled hair sticking out from his head, as if he has just run his hands through it (Figure 10.8). His expression suggests he was acting madness, rage or possibly jealousy from his listed emotions.

In carrying out their project, the four collaborators wrestled with the contradictions of photographic portraiture, as Alan Trachtenberg has discussed. By employing Le

Figure 10.8 Montgomery P. Simons, *Passions Series, Mann Satterwaite Valentine II*, 1853, daguerreotype, sixth plate, 3 ¾ x 3 ¼ in. The Valentine, Richmond, Virginia.

Brun, the men tied the photographs to a long tradition of enquiry concerning how internal emotions were manifested externally on the body. But by performing these emotions, as was necessary to capture them on the daguerreotype plate, they risked verging on the theatrical, which emerged as a term – as seen in the reviewer's comment on Mayall's 'Lord's Prayer' – that signalled the photographer was moving too far outside what was considered appropriate for the medium. It should be noted that Simons did

not apparently ever advertise his participation in this venture. And Valentine himself criticized their pictures for faulty poses and expressions.[35]

As photographic practice shifted away from the daguerreotype to the adoption of paper and glass processes, a corresponding drive to make narrative pictures did not continue. When Snelling opined in 1856 that painters were increasingly using photography as an aid for their own figure compositions – in which 'an entire composition can be conceived and executed in a few minutes, requiring very little labor in securing appropriate models' which could then be placed 'before him at any time of day as best suits his convenience' to 'paint at his leisure, his own genius and skill being alone requisite to supply the colors with the best effect' – the only specific examples he could mention were from a few years before, referring to the 'Woodsawyer's Nooning', 'The Three Pets' and other works by Hesler and Barnard that had appeared in copy paper prints in the journal's pages.[36] Indeed, by the 1860s, when Sellers noted the lack of composition pictures, Harrison had forsaken the profession of photography to devote himself more fully to acting and painting.

American photographers thus mostly abandoned making subject pictures with the decline of the daguerreotype. Genre subjects only prospered in commercial stereographs, and those were held in contempt within the photographic community. Not long before he examined Rejlander's *Two Ways of Life*, Sellers recounted that 'there has been a good deal of talk about the merits of "composed" pictures, and many of our connoisseurs banish from their collections the made-up semi-theatrical pictures of the shops'. Seller's use of the term 'semi-theatrical' as an insult is a far cry from Harrison's double embrace of photography and the theatre or Valentine and his friends' expression of the emotions. Theatricality was now associated with the perceived vulgarity of some stereographs. Continuing by describing a mock portrayal of the *Ghost Scene from Hamlet*, executed in stereograph with crude backdrops and stuffed birds as the characters, he gave his final opinion: 'There is no good reason why those who like them should not be gratified by scenery, composed pictures, comic or instructive.'[37]

But photographers with ambition rejected the theatrical, as realism triumphed over idealism, even rebuffing the British example of Rejlander. In the late 1850s and 1860s, portraiture, landscape and the documentation of architecture and industry became the accepted modes for American photography because they aligned with the nation's evolving sense of identity, which championed its natural geography and a plucky meritocracy for its expanding population. Genre subjects did not flourish again until the 1870s and after, when an influx of amateur photographers embraced nostalgic narrative subjects. In its earliest decades, the idea that photography could or should tell stories or represent imagined scenes was permissible in America but eventually the understanding of the medium evolved to a more limited belief that it was suited only to representing the observable field of vision.

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Notes

1 Sellers described the visit in his regular letter on American activities to the *British Journal of Photography*: 'Mr. Rejlander's composition picture, *The Two Ways of Life*, was examined with interest, but little said in praise of it. His *Head of John the Baptist* was liked very much indeed, as were also some others of his pictures'. Coleman Sellers, 'Foreign Correspondence', *British Journal of Photography* 9, no. 180 (15 December 1862): 475.

2 See Elizabeth Johns, *American Genre Painting: The Politics of Everyday Life* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991). Johns identifies the heyday of American genre paintings as the decades between 1830 and the start of the Civil War. See also David Lubin, *Picturing a Nation: Art and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Barbara Dayer Gallati, *Making American Taste: Narrative Art for a New Democracy* (London: The New-York Historical Society with D Giles Limited, 2011); and H. Barbara Weinberg and Carrie Rebora Barratt, *American Stories: Paintings of Everyday Life, 1765–1915* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art with Yale University Press, 2009).

3 See Keith Davis, *The Origins of American Photography, 1839–1885, from Daguerreotype to Dry-Plate* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art with Yale University Press, 2007) and Diane Waggoner, *East of the Mississippi: Nineteenth-Century American Landscape Photography* (National Gallery of Art: Washington with Yale University Press, 2017).

4 See Anthony Hamber, *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition* (New Castle, Delaware and London: V&A, 2018).

5 'Character pictures' from the early years that were mentioned in the photographic press, but are not known to be extant, include a 'whole-plate allegorical figure of a family man reading the paper at home – an excellent idea and well executed' by Philip Haas and 'Cupid Reposing', by Dobyn, Richardson & Co at the New York Crystal Palace, described as 'a very ungraceful posture of an ill-formed child, and the coloring is bad'. 'The Exhibition at the Crystal Palace', *Humphrey's Journal* 5, no. 9 (15 August 1853): 139–43. The article also noted the *Cupid Reposing* was withdrawn from the display and replaced by a superior picture. Solomon Carvalho, a Baltimore daguerreotypist from South Carolina, exhibited a single work titled a 'Daguerreotype of the Ten Commandments', at the Franklin Institute in 1852, though it is not clear if this was an image of a painting, of text, or an enactment of a scene. *Catalogue of the Twenty-Second Exhibition of the Franklin Institute*, 1852, 20. See also Davis, *Origins of American Photography*, 49 and 145–51 for other examples that have survived, such as J. T. Zealy, *The Toast*, or *Boys Playing Marbles* by an unknown maker.

6 'Gossip', *Photographic Art-Journal* 6, no. 1 (July 1853): 65. The British-born Meade Brothers operated a prominent studio in New York, which they opened in 1851, after first establishing themselves in Albany. See V. V. Lyons, 'The Brothers Meade', *History of Photography* 14, no. 2 (April–June 1990): 113–34. They returned to the subject of the Seven Ages of Man in a carte-de-visite series in the 1860s. A surviving set is in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery, Washington.

7 'Daguerreotypes in the World's Fair', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 1 (January 1854): 16.

8 On this subject, see Sarah Kate Gillespie, *The Early American Daguerreotype: Cross-Currents in Art and Technology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2016); Martha Sandweiss, ed., *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (Amon Carter Museum and New

York: Harry N. Abrams, 1991); John Wood, ed., *The Daguerreotype* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989); Richard Rudisill, *Mirror Image: The Influence of the Daguerreotype in American Society* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1971); Beaumont Newhall, *The Daguerreotype in America* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976); and Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839–1889* (New York: Macmillan, 1938).

9 'The Brothers Meade', *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, 2, no. 24 (12 June 1852): 377. They were also described as 'command[ing] attention for their happy conception, fine grouping and execution' in *Photographic Art-Journal* 1, no. 3 (March 1851): 189.

10 *Reports by the Juries*, quoted in Hamber, *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition*, 223.

11 Mayall moved to Philadelphia in 1842 and went into partnership with another British photographer, Samuel van Loan, before returning to Britain in 1846. He exhibited other narrative subjects at the Great Exhibition, but these were more likely made in Britain: a four-part series of tableaux illustrating Thomas Campbell's poem, 'The Soldier's Dream', 'The Venerable Bede Blessing an Anglo-Saxon Child (after Nature)' and another of boys fishing. See Hamber, *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition*, 222. Furthermore, in reviews, a large 'Bacchus and Ariadne' is mentioned. See Hamber, *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition*, 223.

12 *Catalogue of Daguerreotype Panoramas, Falls of Niagara, Shakespere's* [*sic*] *Birth-Place, Tomb, Relics, Photographic Pictures, Portraits of Eminent Persons, & c., in the Gallery of the Daguerreotype Institution* (J. E. Mayall, 1847), quoted in Roger Taylor, *Photographs Exhibited in Britain 1839–1865: A Compendium of Photographers and Their Works* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2002). Mayall apparently exhibited the series upon his return to Britain in 1847 in the studio he opened on the Strand.

13 See Hamber, *Photography and the 1851 Great Exhibition*, 217–18. In 1853, Harrison wrote a letter to the *PAJ* emphatically insisting that he, and not Lawrence, was the photographer of *Past, Present, and Future*. Gabriel Harrison, 'Crystal Palace Daguerreotypes *vs:* The New York Tribune', *Photographic Art-Journal* 6, no. 3 (September 1853): 194–5.

14 S. J. Burr, 'Gabriel Harrison and the Daguerreian Art', *Photographic Art-Journal* 1, no. 3 (March 1851): 175.

15 Ibid., 175.

16 Letter to the editors, *Photographic Art-Journal* 1, no. 1 (January 1851): 64.

17 See 'The Anthony Prize Pitcher', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 1 (January 1854): 6–11; 'Presentation of a Silver Pitcher to J. Gurney', *Humphrey's Journal* 5, no. 18 (1 January 1854): 273–4; and 'The Anthony Daguerrean Prize', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 2 (February 1854): 37–9.

18 The *PFAJ* included an engraving of the elaborate silver pitcher, which was engraved with a portrait of Daguerre. 'Anthony Prize Pitcher', 6–7.

19 'Anthony Prize Pitcher', 6.

20 Ibid.

21 *Young America*, a portrait of Harrison's son, who also modelled for *The Infant Saviour Bearing the Cross*, is described as a bust portrait of a youth with dark broadcloth drapery. It is in the collection of the George Eastman Museum. *Helia*, untraced, is described as a young woman with 'rich, massive folds of the drapery, relieved by the brilliant star upon the bosom' with a 'sitting sun' which 'veils its face' as she approaches. 'Anthony Prize Pitcher', 9.

22 'Report of the Committee on Anthony's Prizes', *Humphrey's Journal* 5, no. 19 (15 January 1854): 298.

23 Harrison's description of his Mary Magdalene daguerreotype suggests some similarity to *The Infant Saviour Bearing the Cross*: 'The ideal picture represents her as clasping the crucifix to her breast, while with looks of mingled faith and tenderness, her eye follows the Lamb of God to those heavenly mansions above'. 'Anthony Prize Pitcher', 9.

24 Ibid.

25 Burr, 'Gabriel Harrison and the Daguerrean Art', 175. This daguerreotype is in the collection of the George Eastman Museum, along with a similar one made sometime later of his daughter, Helia.

26 'Anthony Prize Pitcher', 10.

27 Keith F. Davis, *George N. Barnard: Photographer of Sherman's Campaign* (Kansas City, MO: Hallmarks Cards, Inc., 1990), 35–7.

28 Thomas Cole, 'Essay on American Scenery', *American Monthly Magazine* 7 (January 1836): 12.

29 J. F. Harrison, of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, was another daguerreotypist who produced genre scenes. In 1854, Snelling extensively describes 'The Attack', in which a young boy prepares to 'attack' a watermelon with a knife, and 'The Defeat', in which the same boy appears with watermelon fragments, 'his hands pressed against his stomach, and his face tortured with the agony of cholic'. 'Personal and Fine Art Intelligence', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 11 (November 1854): 352. One of his genre pictures, *The Young Bachelor's Sunday Morning*, survives as a copy salted paper print. Showing a young man mending a pair of pants, it was described as 'tell[ing] its own story'. *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 10, no. 5 (May 1857): opposite 144 and 153.

30 'Daguerreotypes at the World's Fair', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 1 (January 1854): 15. *The Three Pets*, depicting a little girl seated with a bird and rabbit on her lap, was also reproduced as a copy salted paper print. 'The Three Pets', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 4 (April 1854): opposite 97 and 123–4. A picture of a young man seated in a chair in a supplicating pose to an older woman on a settee in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum might be the subject *Asking a Favor* or *Granted*.

31 'Driving a Bargain', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 7, no. 9 (September, 1854): 278–9.

32 Quoted in Alan Trachtenberg, *Lincoln's Smile and Other Enigmas* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 81.

33 See Trachtenberg, *Lincoln's Smile*, 30–2 and 81–4.

34 See Laurie A. Baty, 'And Simons', Montgomery Pike Simons of Philadelphia (ca. 1816–1877)', in *Daguerrean Annual* (Pittsburgh: Daguerrean Society, 1993), 183–200.

35 See Trachtenberg, *Lincoln's Smile*, 31.

36 'Personal & Art Intelligence', *Photographic and Fine Art Journal* 9, no. 9 (September 1856): 287–8.

37 Sellers, 'Foreign Correspondence', 157.

11

‘Radically Vicious’: Henry Peach Robinson, Alfred Henry Wall and the Critical Reception of Composition Photography, 1859–63

Juliet Hacking

The irruption, in the late 1850s, of non-technical writings on photography into the journals serving the British ‘photographic body’ makes it possible for us to speak of an emergent specialist photographic criticism.[1] This emergent criticism consolidated the place of rhetorical modes of writing in the specialist discourse constituted by the photographic journals. It took as its main object the relationship between photography and art and/or its correlate, the formulation of an aesthetics for photography. In this essay, I argue that 1859–63 was the dynamic period for this criticism as aesthetic positions and terminology, and their stakes, were still unfixed. This is evident from the critical reception of the exhibition photographs by Henry Peach Robinson (1830–1901) made according to the technique called ‘composition photography’ (printing from two or more negatives onto a single sheet of photographic paper to create a narrative, genre and/or illustrative photograph). Lindsay Smith has argued that the debates over composition photography as published in the British photographic press in this period demonstrate how the advent of photography ‘necessitates a newly defined relationship of deception to imitation’.[2] This semantic imperative was not confined to the realm of aesthetics: new definitions signalled the possibility of other, new configurations, both social and political. In this critical period of contestation over the nature of British photographic aesthetics, writings on the subject of composition photography in both the photographic and the daily/periodical press mobilized shifting aesthetic definitions of ‘imitation’ and ‘deception’ that were encoded with questions of social and political inclusion and exclusion. And, as we shall see, in the process of determining what would ultimately serve for both constituencies as the acceptable face of artistic photography, the possibility raised by composition photography, that of a threat to the so-called natural order, would be closed down.

Petty-bourgeois photographic aesthetics

According to Terry Eagleton, 'the birth of aesthetics as an intellectual discourse coincides with the period when cultural production is beginning to suffer the miseries and indignities of commodification'.[3] At a micro-level, we can see this as true of the birth of specialized photographic aesthetics in the late 1850s. The rise in the number of writings on photography's relationship to art came at a particular juncture in the commercialization of the medium: the successful commodification of stereographic images and of celebrity portraits had provided photography with an enhanced place in the attention economy of the industrializing countries. The symbolic value of this new visual technology was, nonetheless, at odds with the precarity of the trade. In this context, writings that made a contiguity out of conventional binaries such as the mechanical and the metaphorical by invoking a middle ground called photography were also arguments for social mobility.[4] This middle ground would become a locus for the social aspirations of petty-bourgeois workers who gave their 'after hours' leisure, as well as their working day, to photography.

According to Steve Edwards, 'the language of art' as it is found in the photographic journals of the 1860s was 'inflected with a particular petit-bourgeois utopianism' that was 'compatible with the ideology of "self-culture"',[5] the doctrine of self-improvement which, according to its advocate, Samuel Smiles (1812–1904), 'include[d] the education or training of all parts of a man's nature; the physical and moral, as well as the intellectual'.[6] The debates over composition photography in the photographic press are inflected with Smilesean self-culture: in addition, and this is crucial for my analysis, they demonstrate that the personal (and social) empowerment that it promised came at a price. While it was relatively easy for the petty-bourgeois worker in photography to *espouse* the virtues associated with middle-class ideology (such as truth, honesty, integrity, morality) and those political correlates (free speech, democracy, meritocracy) that allowed for social mobility, it was less easy to *embody* them. This was particularly the case for the petty-bourgeois subject whose claim upon respectability was more insecure than those that s/he sought to imitate. While Henry Peach Robinson may have chafed at his entry into trade at fourteen, his training as a printer, and his subsequent acquisition of a photographic studio in a fashionable and rapidly expanding spa town, put him at the upper, respectable end of trade.[7] His adversary in the debates over composition photography, the photographic critic Alfred Henry Wall (1828 (baptized)-1906), on the other hand, had a highly precarious working life. Wall's critical style can appear as highly inconsistent, that is, until one reads his writings as informed by his somewhat tenuous grip on respectability. Nonetheless Wall's writings played a deciding role in the reception of composition photography, and, in so doing, in determining what artistic photography would and could be for many decades to come.

Alfred Henry Wall as photographic critic

Wall, who is oft-quoted in modern accounts of nineteenth-century British photography, was a petty-bourgeois worker in photography who became a prolific

contributor to the photographic journals beginning in the late 1850s.[8] His strategic, and often tendentious, contributions to the debates in these journals over photographic aesthetics were significant at the time for defining terms and parameters, and are significant now for exposing their stakes. In around 1860–1, Wall came to exert an unprecedented degree of influence at the *Photographic News*; at the same time, his writings were often reprinted in other photographic journals (including US ones); and his other activities, such as that of secretary to the South London Photographic Society, ensured that his opinions found another platform in the minutes of its meetings that were published in affiliated photographic journals. Wall's behaviour as a photographic critic was atypical: his output, which was prodigious, was written not only under his own name, but also anonymously and pseudonymously, a *modus operandi* that helped him to garner substantial column inches. He brought the more opinion-led, adversarial mode associated with the back pages of the photographic journals to the front. By accelerating, in this way, the infiltration of authorial modes associated with the commercialization of journalism, Wall's writings provide us with the means to read critically the debates in which he engaged, with his tendentious style provoking other writers into revealing the interests at stake. As a petty-bourgeois worker in photography, Wall's writings for the photographic journals might be claimed for self-culture, and yet his inability to procure a stable line of work suggests that some of his leisure hours might have been enforced.[9] What follows situates Wall's early writings on photography as not idiosyncratic but liminal, thereby offering us the means to detect what was not necessarily articulated. It seems that (the appearance of) self-culture was sometimes achieved not by moral but by deceptive ends.

During 1859, the author-subject Alfred H. Wall emerged in the pages of the *Photographic Journal (Liverpool)* and *Humphrey's Journal of Photography and the Allied Arts and Sciences* (the US journal in which many of his articles for the *Photographic Journal* (*Liverpool*) were reprinted). Beginning the year as an anonymous author on practical matters, he would end it as the named author of a paper on photographic aesthetics: a result, perhaps, of the opportunities for self-culture offered by the figuring of photography as a point of mediation between manual and creative labor and by the expanded forum for journalistic efforts provided by the, increasingly competitive, photographic journals. Wall began the year with the series 'Letters to a Young Photographer' that would run from January to December 1859 in the pages of the *Photographic Journal (Liverpool).*[10] From May 1859 Wall was writing another series on 'practical instruction' ('in colouring photographs') for the same journal but this time under his own name.[11] Wall's final anonymous 'Letter' (said to be occasioned by the instructor's imminent departure to China) was published in the *Photographic Journal (Liverpool)* on the same day that he read his first sustained consideration of photography's relationship to the arts.[12] This was at a meeting of the South London Photographic Society (SLPS). Such societies encouraged rhetorical discourse on photography by soliciting talks that rose above practical issues and would therefore serve as opening addresses at their meetings, as did the editors of the photographic journals who featured these talks in the front pages. The subject of photographic aesthetics was the only non-technical subject with the potential for philosophical musings; it also issued a challenge to the authority of the Photographic Society of London, as the subject

was rarely discussed at the so-called parent society or in the pages of its organ, the *Photographic Journal*.

Notably, Wall's paper on 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts' did not first appear in the *Photographic Journal (Liverpool)*, to which the SLPS was affiliated, but in the *Photographic News*. According to his friend H. S. Ward, it was 'in consequence of a photo-political revolution' that Wall 'transferred his pen and influence' to the latter.[13] The 'revolution' to which Ward referred may be George Wharton Simpson's (1825–80) editorship of the *News* which began in August 1860 and which saw the South London society's decision to switch its affiliation, in 1861, from what was now the *British Journal of Photography* to the *Photographic News*.[14] In the first year of Simpson's editorship, the *News* became a platform for the promotion of four causes: the journal itself, the South London Photographic Society, Alfred Wall's professional and critical credentials, and the claim that photography could be art.[15]

In the late 1850s, there emerged a trope in writings on photography, both in the daily/periodical press and in the photographic journals, that claimed that to bracket photography with the arts was to upset the natural order.[16] This conservative view was sometimes expressed with recourse to a lexicon of derided terms, whether political—such as 'the mass' (as in 'the masses'), 'the people', 'democracy' or 'public opinion'—or sensual (such as 'earthly' or 'body'). All of these terms were used in opposition to a valourized lexicon including 'the educated and intelligent thousand', 'Art', 'soul' and 'Poesy'.[17] According to this position, what was called public opinion was, in fact, the views of a minority who had manipulated the wider masses into adopting their creed. George Wharton Simpson's use of terms such as 'parliament' and 'democracy' to characterize the *Photographic News* implicitly challenged this derided view of political enfranchisement. Alfred H. Wall's exhortations to the photographic body in the pages of the *News* calling upon them to unite in the attempt to have photography recognized as capable of artistic expression had, therefore, a strong political undertone:

> Firmly convinced that photography may take its ground as one of the fine arts; that a pitch of excellence may be in this respect attained which had yet scarcely been hoped for, I call upon photographers to aid in bringing about such a glorious consummation.[18]

Wall attributed photography's failure to achieve its potential not only to the establishment's denigration of it but also to his readers: like Smiles, he castigated those who were not interested in the hard work of self-improvement, in this case those photographers who, he claimed, practised the medium with no regard to its honour. And yet the *News* did not uphold the democratic virtues that it promoted to its readers: according to his biographer, for a brief period, Wall wrote nearly all of the journal.[19] While this claim is impossible to prove, a close reading of his critical writings for the photographic journals strongly suggests that Wall's authorial fictions and deceptions, such as the creation of multiple authorial personae, manipulated a minority view into the majority.

The encoding of photographic criticism, in the period 1859–63, with the aspirations of the petty-bourgeois worker in photography had much to do with Wall's self-fashioning

as a photographic critic. This does not mean that his personal situation or his writings were simply reflective of this class fraction: instead, he substantially contributed to the creation of an aesthetic position that became identified with the interests of the latter. At the same time as he was emerging as an author-subject in the photographic journals, Wall also continued to write pseudonymously and anonymously in their pages presenting his views sometimes as those of the few and sometimes as those of the many. As we shall see this anti-democratic behaviour would be significant in the fashioning of composition photography as a moralized photographic realism *and* for its currency as the legitimate photographic art form among the photographic body. This is because, in the early 1860s, composition photography became (albeit briefly) a species of photographic sedition.

Henry Peach Robinson's photographic art practice

An associated claim to that which identified photography as antithetical to the established order is the identification of it with other species of imitation deemed illegitimate, such as organ-grinding and waxwork mannequins, characterized as ghastly mechanical approximations of the true.[20] In October 1858, in an article for the *Photographic Journal*, Henry Peach Robinson refuted this pejorative characterization of photography but did not offer a coherent rationale for bracketing it with the fine arts.[21] Eighteen months later, after the award of a silver medal by the Photographic Society of Scotland for his *Here They Come!* (1859), Robinson accepted the invitation to give a paper to the society. Asserting that the creation of works that embodied photography's highest expression should be conceived of as a duty by working photographers, he advocated that they dedicate some of their leisure hours to this pursuit.[22] Robinson's high-minded call to photographic self-culture was accompanied by a practical exposition of the processes by which he obtained his figure compositions, in order that others could emulate his practice. Robinson revealed, for instance, that he had not photographed his models in the setting portrayed in his images but had instead photographed them in his backyard and then montaged in the darkroom the negative featuring his models with one of an outdoor setting in order to create the final composition.

In her 1988 monograph on Robinson, Margaret Harker claimed that Robinson's disclosure of his working methods was greeted with 'a storm of protest' from within the photographic body.[23] The journals reveal, however, that the initial responses to Robinson's paper were confined to a few desultory comments in the back pages of the *British Journal of Photography*. The first of these were attributed to Michael Hannaford, said to be a member of the SLPS. He expressed his animadversions to the paper in general and in particular to the comparison he claimed Robinson had drawn between a Pre-Raphaelite creed of fidelity to nature and the methods by which Robinson composed his photographs. Robinson's methods, claimed Hannaford, were the epitome of deception.[24] Hannaford's tendentious intervention was followed a month later by the satirical contribution of 'Mrs Spriggins'. 'Mrs Spriggins', a meddling, petty-bourgeois housewife who was a common figure of fun in contemporary periodical journalism, identified Robinson's methods as the same

as those she used when doing her patchwork and demanded of the editor whether therefore she too were an artist.[25]

Composition versus patchwork

When Alfred Wall began to write about photographic aesthetics in late 1859, he, like Robinson, challenged the views of those who identified photography with the masses and their supposed predilection for debased forms of mimesis.[26] Wall did not, however, identify a particular photographic practice as the model for having photographers recognized as capable of artistry. Instead, he identified criticism as the means to do so: according to Wall, if photographs seen in exhibitions were spoken of as pictures, they would be recognized as pictorial productions.[27] Initially approving of composition photography in his writings,[28] Wall responded to the paper Robinson gave at the Photographic Society of Scotland with a scathing article entitled 'Composition' versus 'Patchwork'.[29] Wall deployed the satirical term coined by 'Mrs Spriggins' in the title of his paper, repeated Hannaford's identification of composition photography as illegitimate photographic aesthetics and expressed his views in an adversarial tenor borrowed from the back pages. Wall argued that what was called 'composition photography' was only artistic photography when 'composition' referred to the selection of the scene or the grouping of the figures and not the creation of a photographic picture by exposing sections of different negatives onto the same piece of photographic paper in the darkroom. 'Patchwork photographers' were, said Wall, mistaking deception for imitation and therefore robbing photography of 'its highest and only value', that of its 'wondrous truthfulness'.[30] He condemned Robinson as perpetrating a deception upon the public and, in so doing, 'sinning against his conscience'.[31] For his part, Robinson laughed off 'Mrs Spriggins' as a light-hearted joke at his expense but acknowledged that he had to take seriously an adversary with Wall's credentials.[32] 'Mrs Spriggins' and A. H. Wall were, however, likely one and the same.[33]

Wall's writings for the photographic press regarding photography's relationship to art were highly strategic: the debates he engineered were intended to convince his readers of the merits of one particular version of photographic aesthetics. Whereas for the leading topographic photographer, Francis Frith (1822–98), writing in the *Art-Journal* in 1859, the truthfulness ascribed to photography marked its difference from art, in Wall's analysis the more faithful a transcript from nature the more a photograph would approach the condition of art.[34] This was the view espoused by one of Wall's pseudonyms. According to 'Lovetruth', there were two types of art, realism and idealism, and photography belonged to the first order.[35] The species of realism at stake was such that the rendering of the material appearance of a subject, sitter or atmospheric effect did not automatically mark an absence of the higher values that they signified. Instead, it was the role of the photographer to render a scene encountered in real life in such a way that the sentiment inspired in him by it was conveyed to the viewer of the photograph.[36] To achieve this, the photographer would have to deploy intellectual as well as mechanical labour, laying claim for photography, and for himself, to a metaphorical middle ground between the two. Occupying this notional middle ground (actually or performatively) allowed the photographer, and the photographic

critic, to emulate (imitate) his social betters as a model for the less socially elevated reader. The demands of self-culture were so rigorous however that 'deceptive' means were used to achieve emulatory ends, as was, I am arguing here, the case with the critical writings of Wall *and* the artistic photographic practice of Robinson. What was needed in both cases was the manufacture of a critical reading of illegitimate deception as legitimate imitation.

The division of opinion between Wall and Robinson, which ran to another article by each commissioned by the *British Journal of Photography*, saw the terms of the debate increasingly inflected by Wall's tendentious style. At the same time, Wall's position was weakened by his mendacious attempts to accrue authority as a commentator on art. George Shadbolt (1817–1901), the editor of the *British Journal of Photography*, responded to Wall's inference that he had studied at the Royal Academy schools under J. W. M. Turner, by pointing out that Wall's (lowly) trade, that of photographic colourist, was but another species of photographic manipulation.[37] When the august *Photographic Journal* began to endorse both Robinson and his composition photographs in its editorials, it might be thought that Wall would be entirely discredited.[38] He however countered this threat by simply reverting to his original espousal of composition photography.[39] What at first appears as a highly idiosyncratic authorial style begins to look like a strategic deployment of *both* imitation and deception in order to support an identification of A. H. Wall as an intellectual, rather than manual, worker in photography.

The guardians of established rights

Composition photography now became the cause behind which Dr Hugh Welsh Diamond (1809–86) (*Photographic Journal*), George Shadbolt (*British Journal of Photography*) and George Wharton Simpson (*Photographic* News) united in the face of their common enemy: the established press. In early 1861, the *Times* congratulated the Photographic Society of London for exercising its judgement wisely regarding the pretensions of photographers by seeking to exclude works that encroached on the domain of art; however, the anonymous reviewer (Tom Taylor, 1817–80) lamented the inclusion of Robinson's *A Holiday in the Wood* (1860) (Figure 11.1) which, he claimed, fell into this category.[40] This composition photograph featured one of the tropes of genre art that eluded single negative photography: a complex arrangement of different figure groupings in an outdoor setting, in this case a bank and wood representing the bucolic English countryside and ten young (or youngish) people intent on frolicking, gathering flowers and eating. From the *Times* review, it is clear that Taylor knew how the photograph had been made but it seems other critics did not.[41] When the photograph was exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1862, 'printed from several negatives' was appended to the title as printed in the exhibition catalogue.[42] For the *Athenaeum*, what was previously 'a most successful and effective' photograph was now 'miserably depressing to the spectator'.[43] The *Illustrated London News* exchanged its opinion of 1861 that composition photography was a high class of photographic endeavour for the opinion that this type of labour was in vain.[44] The *Daily Telegraph* went much further, asserting that 'such a system of legerdemain is radically vicious'.[45]

Figure 11.1 Henry Peach Robinson, *A Holiday in the Wood*, June 1860, albumen silver print, image (irregular) 44.7 × 56.5 cm. George Eastman Museum, Rochester NY, gift of Alden Scott Boyer 1970.0192.001. Reproduced with the permission of George Eastman Museum, Rochester.

When the guardians of established rights claimed that the practice of making montaged photographic tableaux was akin to putting power into the hands of those unfit to govern, Diamond, Shadbolt and Simpson responded by endorsing composition photography as *the* legitimate form of photographic art. This was less a seditious challenge to the natural order, however, than a symbolic performance for their readers of their right to determine what was or was not legitimate photographic art. These editors now began to exercise a homologizing function as regards the subject in the pages of their respective journals: for example, when in early 1863, Thomas Sutton (1819–75), the irascible editor of *Photographic Notes*, identified composition photography as the only category of photographic production for which there was no market and therefore as an abuse of the medium, Diamond characterized his opinions as 'rank heresy'.[46] Sutton's views echoed those of commentators in the daily and periodical press who saw composition photography as symbolic of a degradation of the ideal at the hands of the real. Shadbolt, Simpson and Diamond responded by claiming it exclusively for the real.[47] In early 1863, Diamond presented Robinson's *Bringing Home the May* (1862) (Figure 11.2), a large-scale photographic tableaux made from nine negatives featuring young women and girls returning from the fields having gathered the May blossom, in these terms:

Figure 11.2 Henry Peach Robinson, *Bringing Home the May*, c. 1862, albumen silver print. The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the V&A, acquired with the generous assistance of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund, RPS.2135-2018. © Royal Photographic Collection/Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

> Mr Robinson never manufactures pictures, but goes straight to nature; he does not use artificial accessories of any kind, nor does he dress his figures … They are just such girls in just such dress as we see in the charming Warwickshire lanes, where we also see just such leafy landscapes.[48]

This description of Robinson's working methods was in direct contradiction to the photographer's own exposition of them in the photographic journals in which he stressed how he managed to create the effects he sought through costuming his models, making and using a variety of props, and deceiving the eye by passing one thing off as another. But securing a reading of Robinson's settings, models and subjects as authentic was now necessary in order to claim photographic realism as a species of valourized imitation. A few days later, Simpson wrote in the *Photographic News*: 'No one ever dreams of expecting works of the imagination from photography … But is there no fine art but ideal art?'[49]

Photographic art as realism

The emergence of a consensus among three leading photographic journals that there was no place for the ideal in photographic art was significant for Robinson's later exhibition practice and writings on photography. In 1861, Diamond had identified Robinson's recent *Lady of Shalott* (Figure 11.3), based on the Arthurian legend popularized by Tennyson's lyrical ballad, and made from five negatives, as among those works serving to 'procure for photography the place it ought to have in the Fine Arts'[50] but Robinson later (in 1892) repudiated the work as 'a *ghastly* mistake' (my italics).[51] That he saw it in these terms is symptomatic of, I would argue, a significant shift in photographic aesthetics that emerged in 1863 when influential writers, critics and practitioners closed down the claim of photography upon the ideal. In 1868 Robinson wrote in the *Photographic News*:

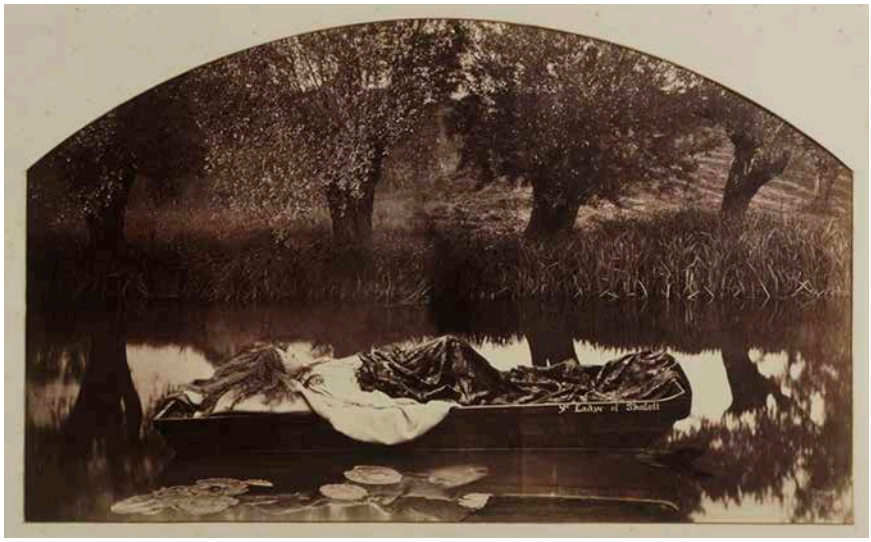


Figure 11.3 Henry Peach Robinson, *The Lady of Shalott*, 1861, albumen silver print. The Royal Photographic Society Collection at the V&A, acquired with the generous assistance of the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Art Fund, RPS.3281-2018. © Royal Photographic Collection/Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

> I shall confine myself to what may be called the construction of a picture: in fact, I propose to deal with the body, or perhaps the skeleton, and not with the soul; with the tangible, not the intangible; with that which can be taught, not that which must be felt.[52]

Lovetruth's position regarding photographic aesthetics, that the artistic photographer must render a scene from actuality, and that photographic creativity was to be located in the conception of the scene [that is before rather than after the exposure of the negative(s)], once a minority view was now the (rhetorical) consensus.

According to John Taylor, *Pictorial Effect in Photography: Being Hints on Composition and Chiaroscuro for Photographers* of 1869, the popular book based on Henry Peach Robinson's 1868 articles for the *Photographic News*, should alert us to 'the eclipse of Romanticism at an active level of culture in the mid-nineteenth century'.[53] We can extend Taylor's description of Robinson's writings on pictorial effect as bland to his later exhibition photographs. In Robinson's later composition photographs the ideal would be displaced almost entirely from the picture itself to the title, the latter generally a borrowing from English literature or poetry or an allegorical etiquette such as *When the Day's Work Is Done* (1877) (Figure 11.4). This composition features an elderly rustic couple, picturesquely dressed, in a humble cottage setting with the grandmotherly figure attending to her darning while her husband labours diligently over his reading from (what is presumably) the Bible. Such skilful renderings, with multiple negatives,

Figure 11.4 Henry Peach Robinson, *When the Day's Work Is Done*, 1877, albumen silver print, 56 × 74.5 cm (22 1/16 × 29 5/16 in). The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, 84.XM.898. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

of the effect of Renaissance perspective should not blind us to the fact however that Robinson's earlier composition photographs were anything but bland. The evident distortions of perspective, scale and relationships, and the other imitative disjunctures of Robinson's early composition photographs should not be read simply as primitive attempts at achieving the effect of unmediated realism. As my analysis suggests, they indicate the need for a revision of the historical genealogy of photographic montage and its social politics.

Key debates over photography's relationship to realism and its correlates did not take place amongst an (undifferentiated) 'Victorian' viewing public, as Jordan Bear has asserted.[54] As we have seen, in the case of composition photography there were two loci, the daily/periodical press and the photographic journals. Moreover, in the case of the latter, the debates were substantially generated by the writings of one critic, three editors and one photographer. My analysis posits the active political dimension of combination photography not as the 'visual discernment' of its 'fundamentally mediated status,'[55] but as the socio-political symbolism of imitation and its inverse encoded into its criticism. The moral of the story of early British composition photography is that the identification of photography as an art of the real is *always* strategic and *always* serves to delimit its aesthetic and symbolic field of operations. It was only when social aspiration (read by the establishment as presumption) was

at stake that British art photography (produced by practitioners from within the photographic body) renounced its claim upon the tragic women of poetic imagination in favour of the benign grandmothers of genre art.

Notes

1 The phrase 'photographic body' is Elizabeth Eastlake's [Elizabeth Eastlake], 'Photography', *Quarterly Review* 101, no. 202 (April 1857): 442–68.

2 Lindsay Smith, *Victorian Photography, Painting and Poetry: The Enigma of Visibility in Ruskin, Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996 (1995)), 104.

3 Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996 (1990)), 64.

4 In 1855, in a paper given at the Liverpool Photographic Society, J. T. Foard, a member of the society, asserted that photography should not be judged by its present state of development but according to its potential. Portraiture, conceived of a harmonious conjunction of reproductive and creative labour, was, according to Foard, a model for conceptualizing photography. While others had sought to contain the threat posed by photography to a social body divided into two classes, the governing and the governed, Foard welcomed the advent of a new social, philosophic and pictorial category that could mediate between them; see Juliet Hacking, 'Photography Personified: Art and Identity in British Photography' (PhD diss., University of London, Courtauld Institute, 1998): 48–50. This essay is based on unpublished research from chapters one and two of this dissertation.

5 Steve Edwards, *The Making of English Photography: Allegories* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 124–5.

6 Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help; with Illustrations of Character and Conduct* (London: John Murray, 1859), 240. Smiles speaks in this manual of attending to his interests in his 'leisure evening moments, after the hours of business'; vi.

7 For an extensive biography of Robinson, see Margaret Harker, *Henry Peach Robinson: Master of Photographic Art 1830–1901* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1988. In the period under discussion, Robinson ran a commercial photographic studio in Royal Leamington Spa, a fashionable provincial town in Warwickshire. He had grown up in Ludlow in Shropshire, a picturesque market town with 'a prosperous middle class' (Harker, 5). The son of a schoolmaster, his ambition to be an artist was nurtured by a local patron, a former student of the Royal Academy schools, but at fourteen he was apprenticed to a local printer, stationer and bookseller.

8 Wall's writings on photography have been subject of extensive analysis; see Edwards, *The Making of English Photography*, and Hacking, *Photography Personified*.

9 The biographical sketches written by a friend, together with the evidence offered by the photographic journals, tell us that Wall was born in the City of London and ran away from home after he was made to work as a clerk. He, it is said, worked (variously) as an assistant to a London daguerreotypist, a supernumerary actor, an assistant to a miniaturist, a partner in a London studio that made both daguerreotype and miniature portraits, the proprietor of his own portrait business in the Strand; an itinerant portrait painter in the provinces; a provincial actor (and scene painter); a photographic colourist in the London firm of Cotton & Wall; the proprietor of his own photographic colouring studio in Old Bond Street; a photographic colourist working from home; and as a maker of photographic backgrounds. In addition, he

was also a photographic critic, editor, novelist, playwright, childrens' author, general author and biographer; see unattributed (Henry Snowden Ward), 'Brief Biographies: A. H. Wall', *The Photogram* 2, no. 17 (May 1895): 103–4; H.S.W. (Henry Snowden Ward), 'Variography', *Photogram* 10, no. 119 (November 1903): 339; and H.S.W., 'The Death of Mr A. H. Wall', *British Journal of Photography* (hereafter *BJP*) 53, no. 2408 (29 June 1906): 512–13. See also Hacking, *Photography Personified*, 80–3.

10 Unattributed (Alfred H. Wall), 'Letters to a Young Photographer', *Photographic Journal (Liverpool)* 6, no. 85 (1 January 1859): 9; the last letter (of 25) was published in the last issue of volume 6 (15 December 1859).

11 Alfred H. Wall, 'Practical Instructions on Colouring Photographs', *Photographic Journal (Liverpool)* 6 (1 May 1859): 112; this series continued into vols 7 (1860) and 8 (1861) of the journal which became the *British Journal of Photography* with the first number of volume 7.

12 Alfred H. Wall, 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts', *Photographic News* 3, no. 69 (30 December 1859): 193–5.

13 H.S.W., 'The Death of Mr A.H. Wall', 512. In fact, Wall continued to write for the *British Journal of Photography.* In addition, some of his writings for both the *Photographic News* and the *British Journal of Photography*, including 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts', were reprinted in other UK and US photographic journals.

14 George Wharton Simpson was, in addition to being the editor of the *Photographic News*, a journalist, photographer and author of a photographic manual.

15 It should be noted that 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts' appeared in the *Photographic News* prior to Simpson's editorship. Under Simpson, puffs for Wall's commercial enterprises and for his *A Manual of Artistic Colouring as Applied to Photographs* (1861), published under the imprint of the *Photographic News*, appeared in its pages.

16 See, for example, Eastlake, 'Photography'.

17 The most well-known diatribe is Charles Baudelaire's 'Le public moderne et la photographie' from his review of the Salon des Beaux-arts of 1859; online at journals.openedition/org/etudesphotographiques/185 (accessed 14 January 2019). See also Ronald Campbell, 'Photography for Portraits – A Dialogue held in an Artist's Studio', *Art-Journal* 4 (1 September 1858): 273–5, and, unattributed (H. Story-Maskelyne), 'The Present State of Photography', *National Review* 8, no. 16 (April 1859): 365–92 and 379–80.

18 Alfred H. Wall, 'Photography as Imitative Art', *Photographic News* 4, no. 14 (9 November 1860): 327–8, 328.

19 Unattributed (H. S. Ward), 'Brief Biographies: A. H. Wall', 104. Ward repeated this claim in his obituary of Wall.

20 See, for example, Edwards, *The Making of English Photography*, 148–53.

21 Henry Peach Robinson, 'Photography, Artistic and Scientific' (second instalment), *Photographic Journal* 5, no. 71 (21 October 1858): 47–8, 48.

22 Henry Peach Robinson, 'On Printing Photographic Pictures from Several Negatives', *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 115 (2 April 1860): 94–5.

23 M. Harker, *Henry Peach Robinson*, 27.

24 'Photographic Gossip, No. 1', *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 117 (1 May 1860): 140.

25 'Correspondence/Mrs Spriggins on Patchwork', *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 119 (1 June 1860): 172.

26 Wall directly challenged Howard and Campbell's articles and that in the *National Review* (see footnote 19) in 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts', 193.

27 A.H.W. (Alfred H. Wall), 'From a Photographer's Common-Place Book – Photographic Exhibitions and Art Progress', *Photographic News* 4, no. 111 (19 October 1860): 292–3, 292. The acuity of this assertion has received little scholarly attention.

28 Wall, 'Photography as One of the Fine Arts', 194.

29 Alfred H. Wall, 'Composition' versus 'Patchwork' ', *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 120 (15 June 1860): 176. The reasons for Wall's *volte-face* are not known. We might speculate that it was a hostile response to the *Photographic Journal*'s return to the subject of artistic photography, a terrain occupied by Wall and by those photographic journals which sought to appeal to the growing constituency of petty-bourgeois readers.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Henry Peach Robinson, 'Composition NOT Patchwork', *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 121 (2 October 1860): 189–90.

33 That Mrs Spriggins was likely one of Wall's pseudonyms can be deduced from a later article of his; unattributed [A. H. Wall], 'Paul Pry's Visit to Mrs Spriggins – A Lesson on 'Sharpness', *British Journal of Photography* 8, no. 145 (1 July 1861): 246.

34 Francis Frith, 'The Art of Photography', *Art-Journal* 5 (1 March 1859): 71–2.

35 See, in particular, the last six instalments of Wall's 'From a Photographer's Common-Place Book', beginning with A. H. Wall, 'Dialogue Sketches – No. 1. Photography to Art', *Photographic News* 4, no. 103 (30 November 1860): 363–4.

36 See Wall's comments printed under 'Proceedings of Societies – South London Photographic Society', *Photographic Journal* 6, no. 91 (15 November 1859): 76–82.

37 (George Shadbolt), Editorial, *British Journal of Photography* 7, no. 121 (2 July 1860): 187–8; 187. Shadbolt, a City broker in mahogany and a respected researcher in the field of photographic optics, became the editor of (what would become known as) the *British Journal of Photography* in March 1858.

38 Unattributed (Dr H. Diamond), 'Review - "A Holiday in the Wood". Photographed from Nature. By Henry P. Robinson, of Leamington', *Photographic Journal* 8, no. 104 (15 December 1860): 72–3. Diamond, as is well known, was the superintendent of the female department of the Surrey County Asylum in which role, from 1848 to 1858, he photographed his patients as a diagnostic tool. He became editor of the *Photographic Journal* in August 1858.

39 For this *volte-face*, see Alfred H. Wall, 'Hints on "Keeping" - In Composition Photography', *Photographic News* 4, no. 121 (28 December 1860): 411–12.

40 Unattributed (Tom Taylor), 'Exhibition of the Photographic Society', *The Times*, no. 23833 (18 January 1861): 7.

41 See Unattributed, 'Fine Arts – Photographic Society', *Athenaeum*, no. 1734 (19 January 1861), 88–9 and Unattributed, 'The Photographic Society - Eighth Annual Exhibition', *The Sun*, no. 21381 (24 January 1861): unpaginated.

42 Her Majesty's Commissioners, *International Exhibition of 1862. Catalogue of the Photographs Exhibited in Class XIV* (London: Her Majesty's Commissioners, 1862), 2. For the debates over the classification of photography at the exhibition, see Edwards, *The Making of English Photography*, and Hacking, *Photography Personified.*

43 Unattributed, 'Fine Arts – International Exhibition. Photographs', *Athenaeum*, no. 1825 (18 October 1862): 504–5, 504.

44 See (Thomas Sutton), Editorial, 'Newspaper Critics and Photography', *Photographic Times* 1, no. 18 (15 July 1861): 152–3.
45 Unattributed, 'International Exhibition', *Daily Telegraph*, no. 2194 (5 July 1862): 5.
46 Thomas Sutton, 'On Some of the Uses and Abuses of Photography', *Photographic Notes* 8, no. 163 (15 January 1863): 14–18; and Unattributed (Dr H. Diamond), 'On Composition Photographs', *Photographic Journal* 8, no. 130 (16 February 1863): 234–5, 235. Sutton, a Cambridge-educated mathematician, was also a photographer, an inventor of photographic technology and the proprietor, with Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard, of a photographic printing works in Jersey, where he lived. In 1856, Sutton founded the journal *Photographic Notes*.
47 In 1864, Robinson closed his Leamington studio and in 1865 moved with his family to London, close to his friend George Wharton Simpson. In his three years in London, he set up a private studio for making artistic photographs and wrote for the photographic journals; Harker, *Henry Peach Robinson*, 41.
48 See, for example, Unattributed (Dr H.W. Diamond), 'Review – Bringing Home the May', *Photographic Journal* 8, no. 130 (16 February 1863): 235–6.
49 Unattributed (G. W. Simpson), 'A Final Word on Art-Photography and its Critics', *Photographic News* 7, no. 237 (20 February 1863): 134.
50 Unattributed (Dr H. Diamond), 'Review – "The Lady of Shalott" by H P Robinson', *Photographic Journal* 7, no. 114 (15 October 1861): 286–7, 287.
51 Harker, *Henry Peach Robinson*, 33.
52 Henry Peach Robinson, 'Pictorial Effect in Photography: Being Lessons in Composition and Chiaroscura [*sic*] for Photographers', *Photographic News* 12, no. 491 (31 January 1868): 52–3, 53.
53 John Taylor, 'Henry Peach Robinson and Victorian Theory', *History of Photography* 3, no. 4 (October 1979): 295–303.
54 Jordan Bear, *Disillusioned: Victorian Photography and the Discerning Subject* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2015), 5.
55 Ibid., 4, 32.

12

From 'Studies from Nature' to 'Studies for Painting': Julia Margaret Cameron in the South Kensington Museum

Marta Weiss

In her influential 1982 essay 'Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape/View', Rosalind Krauss argued against the insertion of photographs 'originally undertaken for the purposes of exploration, expedition, and survey' into art museum exhibitions and art historical categories.[1] Krauss focused her critique on the re-presentation of Timothy O'Sullivan's survey photographs of the American West and Eugène Atget's views of Paris. By 2018, when my colleagues and I were preparing the inaugural display of the new Photography Centre at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), the shifting status of certain photographs from useful records to precious objects displayed and studied in art museums was widely recognized. Our awareness of such trajectories informed the ways we presented many of the photographs in the exhibition, including works by both O'Sullivan and Atget, which we happened to install in close proximity on one wall of the gallery. In acknowledgement of the context in which O'Sullivan produced his celebrated view of Navajo cliff dwellings, we mounted the print with a margin wide enough to reveal the entire page on which it was originally published, complete with official seal and the heading 'War Department, Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army' (Figure 12.1). Seen from afar in a museum setting, the horizonless composition resembles a modernist abstraction. But the tiny figures in the landscape provide a sense of scale and the printed caption implies that these figures were part of a government-sponsored geological survey. In the label accompanying four photographs by Atget, we explained that the V&A had purchased the views of Parisian staircases directly from the photographer in 1902 as records of decorative metalwork, well before Atget was incorporated into histories of photography as a proto-Surrealist master.

If it has long been accepted that certain early photographs originally produced with documentary or utilitarian aims have subsequently been recategorized as works of art, there are other nineteenth-century photographs whose status seems to have remained more stable. The photographs of Julia Margaret Cameron (1815–79) are one such case. Apparently created as works of art and still operating as works of art

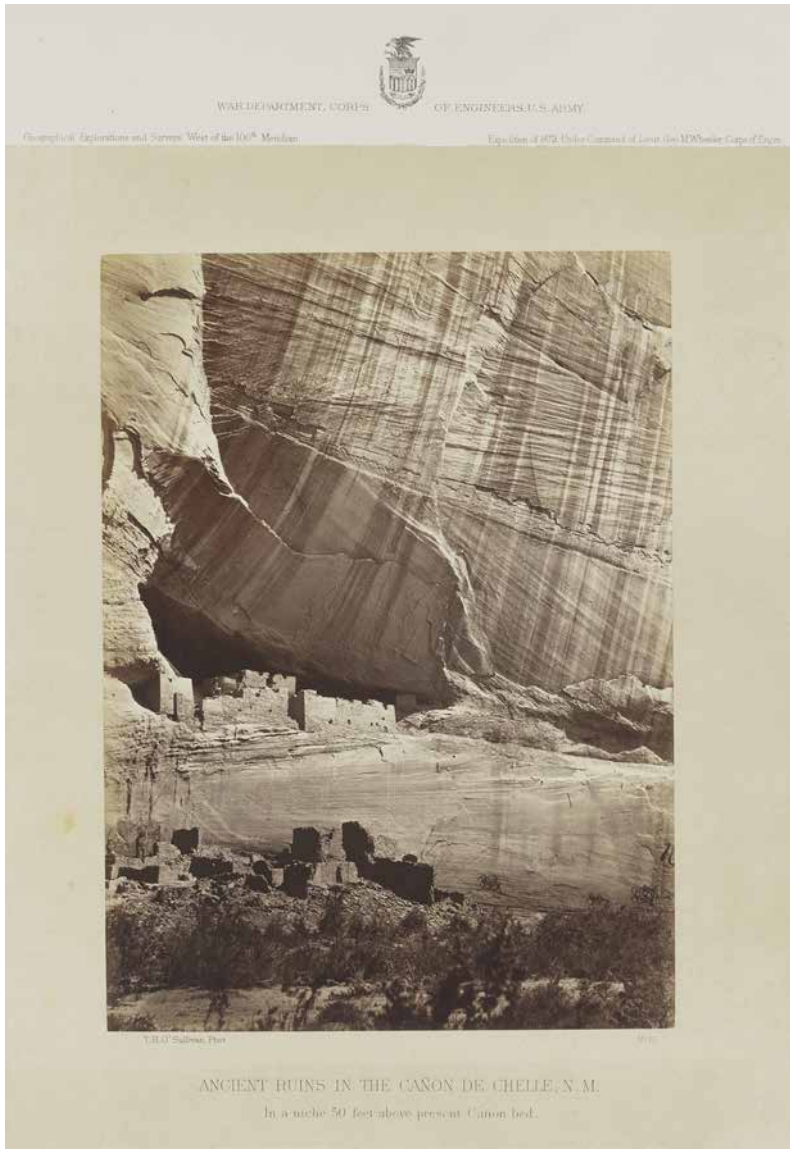


Figure 12.1 Timothy O'Sullivan, *Ancient Ruins in the Cañon de Chelle, New Mexico*, 1873, albumen silver print, 27.3 × 20.1 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, PH.242-1979. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

today, their identity seems to have remained constant since they were made. In an oft-quoted statement, Cameron declared the artistic aims of her photographic practice: 'My aspirations are to ennoble Photography and to secure for it the character and uses of High Art by combining the real & Ideal & sacrificing nothing of Truth by all possible

devotion to poetry and beauty.'[2] In the V&A Photography Centre, hanging opposite the O'Sullivan and the Atgets, three photographs by Cameron occupy exactly the type of space for which she apparently intended them: the gallery wall.

During the course of her photographic career, Cameron not only exhibited in commercial art galleries, international exhibitions and photographic society exhibitions, but in 1865 the V&A itself (or rather the South Kensington Museum, as it was then called) acquired over 100 examples of her Italian Renaissance-inspired Madonnas, literary subjects and evocatively soft-focus, close-up portraits of writers and artists.[3] The museum exhibited them later that year, in the words of one critic, 'in a prominent place … close to the picture collections'.[4] Cameron's only museum exhibition during her lifetime, this display granted further institutional endorsement to her photographs and today suggests that the museum was remarkably early in accepting photography as an art form.

The apparently stable identity of photographs made with artistic ambition in the 1860s, collected and exhibited at the time by a museum of art and design, and displayed in that same museum today is complicated, however, by a closer examination of those photographs. If some of the photographs the South Kensington Museum acquired from Cameron were to be presented in the same manner as the O'Sullivan photograph, their original mounts would reveal several signs that their status within the museum has not in fact been consistent. The mount of a photograph Cameron called *Devotion* (1865), for instance, bears not only Cameron's own signature and annotations, but also museum classifications handwritten directly on the mount as well as a typed label pasted in one corner (Figure 12.2). These markings are testament to its path from Cameron's studio to the museum and its subsequent journey within the institution. When these clues are assessed alongside other sources of archival evidence, including private letters, published articles and museum documentation, the presumed original status of Cameron's photographs as works of art becomes even less certain. The aim of this essay is to investigate these primary sources in order to demonstrate that the status of Cameron's photographs has not been fixed since they entered the museum and furthermore that their artistic standing was never secure in the first place.

Photographs classified

Devotion makes a useful case study, since the markings on the mount are especially legible and demonstrate how Cameron's works occupied multiple registers for the photographer herself, as well as within the museum. Although its landscape orientation is somewhat unusual, it otherwise bears many of Cameron's hallmarks: soft focus; close-up composition; a dark backdrop and strong, directional lighting; spots and swirls of technical imperfections; a female figure in profile; a half-dressed child; and the Christian subject matter of the Madonna and child. The models are also typical: Mary Hillier, Cameron's housemaid and favourite for the role of the Madonna, and a very young member of Cameron's own family. The title, *Devotion*, which Cameron wrote under the photograph in large, underlined script, is suggestive of both piety and motherhood. In smaller letters to the left, she added, 'From Life My Grand child age 2

Figure 12.2 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Devotion*, 1865, albumen silver print, 22.8 × 27.9 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 45154. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

years & 3 months', making the image function simultaneously as a religious study and a family portrait.

A museum number was inscribed in small, neat script beneath Cameron's signature when the photograph entered the collection of South Kensington Museum. The notations in the lower left of the mount, 'Child (sleeping) and Mother, Study of', and above the image, 'Studies for Painting, XXIV aa, A', were added in another hand when a new system of classifying and storing the museum's photographs was implemented around 1895.[5] Class XXIV contained 'Photographic Studies for Paintings' and was subdivided into categories including 'Trees' (d), 'Flowers, Fruit, etc.' (e) and 'Clouds' (h). 'Figures at rest' (a) were distinguished from 'Figures in motion' (b) and the category was further broken down into 'Human figures' (aa) and 'Animals, etc.' (ab). The 'aa' on the mount of *Devotion* therefore meant that it depicted human figures at rest. The capital 'A' in the top right referred to the 'Small box' in which it was stored.[6] A typed label, pasted on the lower right of the mount, reads: 'Photographs by Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron, c.1864–75./"Devotion"'. This label likely dates from the 1930s, when the maker and title of the work were re-inserted into a classification system that for decades had indexed them only according to very literal descriptions of subject matter.[7]

Devotion is one of the photographs the museum's founding director, Henry Cole (1808–82), acquired in the summer of 1865, shortly after Cameron sent him her portfolio accompanied by a letter stating that she 'should be so proud & pleased if this complete series could go into the South Kensington Museum'.[8] By then Cameron had been making photographs with her own camera for about eighteen months, having made the portrait she considered her 'first success', of a little girl called Annie, in January 1864. She was already working in what Cole described in his diary as 'her style': close up, softly focused and marked by imperfections other photographers would have rejected as flaws.[9] She had also established the range of subject matter she would pursue for her entire career, which she described as 'Portraits', 'Madonna groups' and 'Fancy Subjects for Pictorial Effect'.[10] Cole apparently deemed the two latter groups most relevant for the museum and primarily collected her religious, literary and fanciful pictures. It is possible that this preference for more imaginative subject matter was a sign of Cole's appreciation of photography as a means of creative, artistic expression. However, it is more likely, as this essay will demonstrate, that he perceived their potential as inspiring source material to the artists and designers who would consult them at the South Kensington Museum.

When Cameron's photographs arrived at the museum in June, July and September 1865, they were entered into two ledgers. The Library Receiving Room Diaries noted the price and source of each photograph, while the Photographs Acquisition Register assigned an individual number (now referred to as a 'museum number' or 'object number') to each photograph and recorded its storage location.[11] In the latter volume, the photographs acquired in June were registered as 'Figure Studies from Nature/ Photographed by Mrs Cameron/Freshwater Bay Isle of Wight' and the title of each photograph listed. The July batch was recorded in the same way, but without individual titles. In September, the titles were listed once again, but while some photographs were recorded as 'Portraits & Studies from Nature', others were listed simply as 'Studies from Nature'.[12] The variations in terminology and the inconsistent recording of Cameron's assigned titles are indicative of the mutable ways in which the photographs would be documented in museum catalogues and classification systems in years to come.

Before considering these subsequent classifications, it is worth dwelling briefly on the initial terminology. As the photographs entered the collections, they were all described as 'from Nature', which, like the phrase 'From Life' that Cameron herself often inscribed on the mounts of her photographs, emphasized the fact that they depicted actual, living people and were not photographs of other pictures such as paintings or drawings. They were also classed as either 'Studies' or 'Portraits'. In this context, a 'study' depicted a sitter in the guise of a character other than themselves and a 'portrait' showed a named individual, though the distinction was applied inconsistently.

For example, Lady Adelaide Talbot appears in three photographs the museum collected, as herself in the first two and dressed as the melancholy nun from Milton's poem *Il Penseroso* in the third (Figures 12.3–12.5). The first was not individually named but grouped with other 'Figure Studies from Nature', the second was listed as 'Lady Adelaide Talbot' and the third entered as 'Portrait or rather Study of Lady Adelaide Talbot'.[13] The uncertainty implied in the last entry reflects the ambiguous function of such photographs as portraits of individuals and representations of fictional subjects.

Considered together, the three photographs show Cameron herself exploring the dual capacity of photography to record likeness and evoke the imaginary. The two half-length portraits (Figures 12.4 and 12.5) are set against the same legible background of a tree trunk and branches. The relatively sharp focus accentuates Lady Talbot's dress and ornaments in one and her dramatically crossed hands in the other. In addition to changing her gesture, Cameron transformed her sitter from Victorian lady into literary character through the addition of carefully arranged drapery and a quote from Milton, 'Come pensive Nun, devout and pure,/Sober, stedfast [*sic*] and demure,' inscribed beneath. The close-up profile (Figure 12.3) is comparatively radical, showing Cameron developing her characteristic style of soft focus and directional lighting in front of a dark, neutral background. Cameron did not assign a title to this portrait but did give literary titles to other similarly decontextualized portraits of other sitters.

In the South Kensington Museum, the term 'study' would eventually take on another meaning, as photographs that were initially described as 'Studies from Nature' or 'Portraits' were all classified by the museum as 'Studies for Painting'. Within this later system, the picture of Lady Talbot as a nun was classified under 'Studies for Painting' and described on the mount as 'Talbot, Lady Adelaide, Portrait of' and in the printed index as both 'Nun, study for (portrait of Lady Adelaide Talbot)' and 'Talbot, Lady Adelaide; portrait of (study for Nun)'. In the context of the museum, the word 'study' was multivalent, meaning different things at different times. It was initially used to differentiate between photographs depicting named sitters as themselves and those of costumed sitters enacting roles. The former is akin to a record photograph while the latter has more in common with a painting of an imagined literary or historic subject. Eventually, some of Cameron's photographs were classified as 'Studies for Painting' (including some of named individuals) and others were classified as 'Portraits'. While the terms 'Figure Studies' and 'Studies from Nature' suggested a kind of artistic interpretation, as well as the informality of an unfinished work, 'Studies *for* Painting' implied that the photographs merely constituted a useful step on the way to the creation of an artwork.

Photographs displayed

While museum documentation sheds light on how the photographs were described as they entered the museum and how they were subsequently classified, the evidence regarding the display of Cameron's photographs at the South Kensington Museum is sparse.[14] The only mention to be found within the museum's own records occurs in the Register of Correspondence Abstracts, where an entry for 18 September 1865 notes the receipt of a letter in which Mrs Cameron 'asks permission to exhibit Photos'.[15] On 3 November 1865, two references appeared to their being on view: one published, the other in a private letter. The published reference occurs in a footnote to an article in which the critic Alfred H. Wall outlined four types of artistic photographic portraits. Wall grouped Cameron's portraits with those of David Wilkie Wynfield, whose soft tonality he likened to 'fine old pictures of the ancient masters'. He complained, however, of Cameron's 'clumsily and inartistically arranged drapery, bad pictorial composition, and, generally, palpable distortion or bad drawing, arising from a misuse of the lens', continuing that 'what merit they

Figure 12.3 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Lady Adelaide Talbot*, 1865, albumen silver print, 27.5 × 23.5 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 44954. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

have is more frequently due to the personal charms of well-chosen models than to real artistic knowledge, skill, or taste'. He went on to question the positive reception Cameron had received in magazines and exhibitions, wondering at their popularity among the 'higher classes of art-patrons'. Finally, in a sarcastic aside, Wall considered whether his negative assessment of them was inaccurate since 'I find Mrs. Cameron's photographs awarded a prominent place at the South Kensington Museum close to the picture collections, where they hang "in their pride alone".[16] The article reveals little about the exhibition: the number of pictures displayed, their titles and the exhibition's exact location in the museum all remain obscure. But Wall's remarks do

Figure 12.4 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Lady Adelaide Talbot*, 1865, albumen silver print, 26 × 21 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 45142. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

show that he took their presence at the South Kensington Museum as evidence of their being taken seriously (however mistakenly, in his view) as art.

Meanwhile, Cameron's friend Kate Perry wrote to another member of their circle, William Brookfield, about accompanying Cameron, whose daughter Julia had been gravely ill, to see the photographs at the museum:

Figure 12.5 Julia Margaret Cameron, *Il Penseroso*, 1865, albumen silver print, 25.2 × 20.2 cm. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 45146. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

> Mrs. Cameron looked wretchedly aged, and quite broken down were it not for Annie Thackeray getting Mr. Cole to put her photographs in the K.[ensington] Museum, where she took me to see them. They are very beautiful, and as usual she treats the many-headed monster, the public, as her dear familiar and gossip, writing in large hand on these photographs, MY GRANDCHILD, JULIA MARGARET NORMAN, aged 6, with her nurse, and so on.[17]

Perry's account is more humorous than descriptive as she conflates the name of grandchild with that of the grandmother (there was no grandchild called Julia Margaret Norman; Cameron's daughter Julia Norman had two young girls called Charlotte and Adeline). It is likely that what Perry actually saw at the museum was a photograph featuring the toddler son of Cameron's eldest son. The museum had acquired five photographs from Cameron in 1864 which featured Archie Cameron and were inscribed with some variation on the caption *My Grand Child Archie son of Eugene Cameron R.A./aged 2 years 3 months.*[18]

The mention of Annie Thackeray petitioning Cole, like the record of Cameron herself writing to ask that her photographs be displayed, reflects the social aspects of Cameron's photographic career. A close friend of both Cameron and Cole, Thackeray belonged to the 'higher classes of art-patron' that Wall resentfully accused of heaping praise on Cameron. Indeed, she had published a rhapsodic article earlier that year in which she compared Cameron's photographs to works by Leonardo, Michelangelo and Millais.[19]

The evidence that Cameron's photographs were exhibited at the South Kensington Museum is thus limited to one record in the museum archives of Cameron's desire to exhibit her photographs at the museum; one footnote to an article attacking Cameron's technique; and one mention in a private letter of dubious accuracy. These are relatively precarious foundations on which to build the claim that an exhibition at the museum bestowed artistic validation on Cameron's photographs. Although reviews compared Cameron's photographs to works by Old Masters and contemporary painters, the fact that the museum collected and displayed them did not necessarily mean it viewed them as works of art in their own right.

Photographs for artists

With the exception of the 1865 exhibition, all the ways in which the museum treated Cameron's photographs once they had entered the collection suggest that they were viewed not as independent works of art, but rather as source material for artists and designers. This was the primary purpose of most of the photographs the museum collected. As T. C. Grove, the assistant keeper in charge of the Photography Collection, explained in 1908:

> The collection, being intended for the use of all varieties of workers – manufacturers, teachers, art students, pattern designers and workers in the various trades and crafts – naturally includes photographs of many objects besides those which belong to the fine arts or the industrial arts. A use is indeed found for photographs of almost every kind of object; the plant, flower, and animal are in constant use by designers and book illustrators, while architectural and topographical views become of value as records, and are used by many readers in addition to those who are student of architecture.[20]

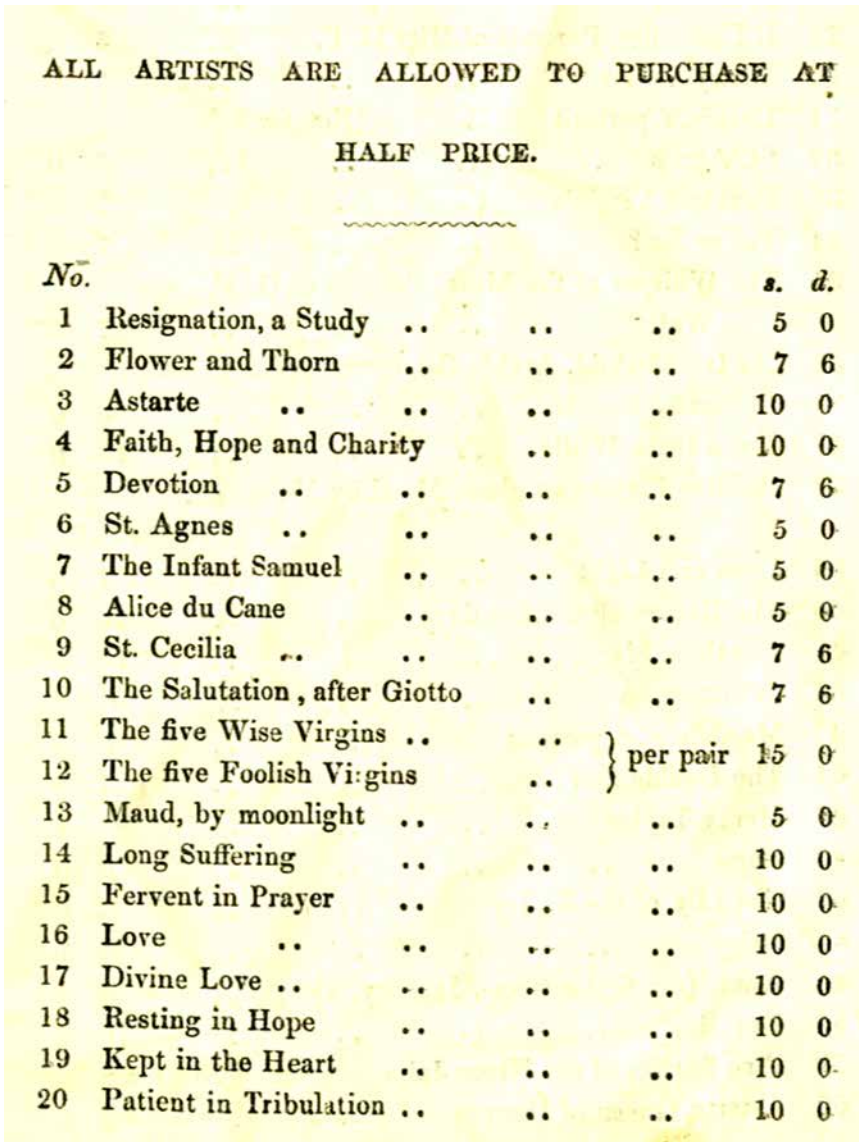
Cole evidently perceived Cameron's photographs as useful to designers since as soon as they were purchased, he gave four to Godfrey Sykes, the designer then engaged in devising decorative schemes for the building at South Kensington.[21] With their High Art aspirations, Cameron's photographs seem utterly different from those made expressly for the purpose of being copied by artists. They lack the clarity – both visually and in their stated intention – of other photographs the museum was collecting at the time. For instance, in the summer of 1865, in between acquiring batches of photographs by Cameron, the museum bought a set of photographs entitled, *The Anatomy of Foliage. Photographed examples of the principal forest trees, each taken from the same point of view in winter and in summer; enabling the student to trace the limbs when hidden by the masses of foliage.*[22] The photographs of trees were, like Cameron's, 'from life', but the vast majority of the thousands of photographs of art, design and architecture that the museum was amassing for the reference of artists, designers, students and connoisseurs were not.

As unlike these record photographs Cameron's photographs may seem now and as exceptional their acquisition by the South Kensington Museum may at first appear, Cameron herself believed her photographs might be of interest, and perhaps of use, to artists. In November 1865, at the same time her photographs were displayed in South Kensington, she presented 158 works, including many of the same images the museum had collected, in a solo exhibition at the French Gallery in Pall Mall.[23] At the top of the price list, a boldly printed statement declared that 'all artists are allowed to purchase at half price' (Figure 12.6).[24] In June of the same year, Cameron had expressed this intention in a letter to her friend Jane Senior: 'I have a long time ago, no a short time ago, told Colnaghi that all Artists were to have my prints at half price.'[25] Her determination that artists have access to her photographs at a significant discount apparently outweighed her desire to earn as much as possible from her photographs – indeed to even meet her expenses – which she lamented in the same letter. It is possible that Cameron saw herself as an artist and that offering her work at a discount to other artists was a way of asserting that she was one of them. But it also possible that she did view her photographs as inspirational for artists, which was the opinion of her friend Coventry Patmore. One of Cameron's most eloquent supporters, he compared her photographs to Old Master paintings but suggested that their ultimate purpose was as tools for artists, rather than works of art in their own right. In fact, he objected to her 'endeavour[ing] to make *pictures* out of them', complaining:

> She is not content with putting one or more noble heads or figures on her paper; but she must group them into *tableaux vivants*, and call them in 'Faith, Hope, and Charity', and 'St. Agnes', 'The Infant Samuel', 'The Salutation, after Giotto', &c. &c. The effect of this is often strange, and sometimes grotesque.

Patmore favoured her portraits, writing that 'the beauty of the heads in these photographs is the beauty of the highest art. We seem to be gazing upon so many Luinis, Leonardos, and Vandyckes', but continued:

The place of photography is as a guide and corrector of the artist's eye … By the aid of such photography as Mrs. Cameron's, an artist of moderate ability is enabled to produce such portraits as could otherwise be painted by none but excellent artists, and … the excellent artists can arrive at a degree of excellence which has long been regarded as extinct.[26]



ALL ARTISTS ARE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE AT

HALF PRICE.

No.			s.	d.
1	Resignation, a Study		5	0
2	Flower and Thorn		7	6
3	Astarte		10	0
4	Faith, Hope and Charity		10	0
5	Devotion		7	6
6	St. Agnes		5	0
7	The Infant Samuel		5	0
8	Alice du Cane		5	0
9	St. Cecilia		7	6
10	The Salutation, after Giotto		7	6
11	The five Wise Virgins	per pair	15	0
12	The five Foolish Virgins			
13	Maud, by moonlight		5	0
14	Long Suffering		10	0
15	Fervent in Prayer		10	0
16	Love		10	0
17	Divine Love		10	0
18	Resting in Hope		10	0
19	Kept in the Heart		10	0
20	Patient in Tribulation		10	0

Figure 12.6 *Mrs Cameron's Exhibition of Photographs, 120 Pall Mall*, price list, November 1865, unpaginated (detail). National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

The artist with whom Cameron shared the largest number of photographs was her good friend G. F. Watts. The conflict between generosity towards artists and her need to earn money from her photographs recurs in their correspondence. Watts urged her:

> Please do not send me valuable mounted copies … send me any … defective unmounted impressions, I shall be able to judge just as well & shall be just as much charmed with success & shall not feel that I am taking money from you.[27]

Within the South Kensington Museum, which did pay full price for Cameron's photographs, cataloguing practices confirm that they were perceived as useful source material for artists.[28] In the first printed index to the photographs collection from 1868, Cameron's photographs are grouped with photographs of drawings by various well-known artists (Figure 12.7).[29] The South Kensington Museum thus equated photographs 'from life' by Julia Margaret Cameron with photographs of Old Master drawings, classifying both as two-dimensional works that could be consulted in the National Art Library.

Cole took this lack of differentiation among genres even further, specifically in reference to a photograph of a drawing by Raphael. In July 1860, when defending the work of the Photographic Department of the South Kensington Museum (which produced photographs of art and architecture, sometimes for sale to the public), he argued that an original drawing by Raphael was 'not finer in quality' than a photograph of a drawing by the artist:

> I have here … a *fac simile* of one of Rafaelle's drawings. At a recent sale at Christie's a drawing not larger than that, and not finer in quality, sold for more than £200; by the agency of photography, and by the action of the Department, any working man in the country may get it for 5d [pence].[30]

By extension, Cole seemed to place equal value on a drawing by Raphael, a photograph of a drawing by Raphael and a photograph by Julia Margaret Cameron, an equivalence that is startling by today's standards.

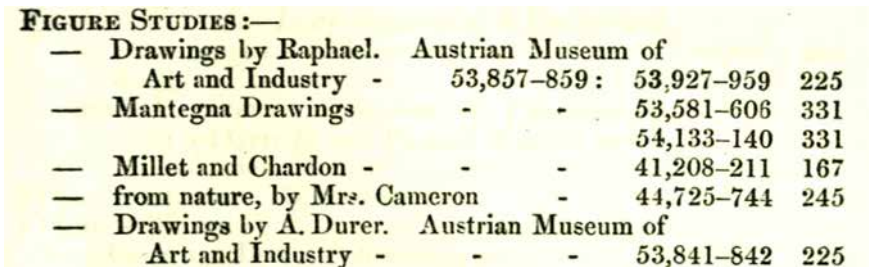


Figure Studies:—			
— Drawings by Raphael. Austrian Museum of Art and Industry -	53,857–859 :	53,927–959	225
— Mantegna Drawings	- -	53,581–606	331
		54,133–140	331
— Millet and Chardon -	- -	41,208–211	167
— from nature, by Mrs. Cameron	-	44,725–744	245
— Drawings by A. Durer. Austrian Museum of Art and Industry -	- -	53,841–842	225

Figure 12.7 *Index to the Collection of Photographs in the National Art Library of the South Kensington Museum* (London 1868), p. 107 (detail). National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

In the 1868 Index, there was also an entry for 'Cameron, Mrs.', under which three groups of photographs were listed: 'Figure Studies from Nature', 'Portraits and Studies from Nature' and 'Studies from Nature'. These categories matched the terminology used in the Photographs Acquisition Register and the Library Receiving Room Diaries when the photographs first entered the museum three years earlier. Although Cameron was named as the author of the photographs, the individual titles of her works were not included. The identity of her photographs – and the conventional signifiers of their status as works of art – was thus steadily eroded through their classification within the institution.

Photographs as art

In 1895 T. C. Grove, who was in charge of the Photograph Section of the National Art Library, established a new system for classifying and storing the museum's collection of photographs. Until then, Grove later explained, 'photographs when acquired had been put away in portfolios, and as soon as one portfolio was filled another was started. Thus photographs of all kinds of objects were stored in the same portfolio'.[31] Grove not only set about classifying the existing collection, which by then he estimated at about 150,000, but in 1898 introduced the practice of classifying photographs as soon as they were acquired. He also rationalized the storage of the photographs, mounting them on standard size mounts and storing them in boxes according to size. Some of Cameron's original mounts were evidently trimmed during this period in order to fit them into boxes of particular sizes. Metaphorically, the meanings of Cameron's photographs were trimmed as well. Not only were the author and titles of the work no longer acknowledged, but their iconography was also ignored. In the 1901 index, Madonna groups were listed as mother and child studies; literary subjects, such as Paul and Virginia, became studies of children; and even portraits of named sitters, such as Cameron's youngest son, Henry Herschel Hay Cameron, were given generalized designations like 'Boy's head, Study of'. The classification was idiosyncratic, however, and a few photographs were listed by subject, such as *Circe* (museum number 45140), which was listed as 'Circe, study for head of; portrait of a girl'.[32]

T. C. Grove was succeeded by Charles Harvard Gibbs-Smith in the 1930s, and it was perhaps in preparation for his *Exhibition of Early Photographs to Commemorate the Centenary of Photography, 1839–1939* that Cameron's photographs were reclassified again. No longer categorized strictly, if idiosyncratically, by subject matter, they were now described as 'Photographs by Mrs. Julia Margaret Cameron, c.1864–75', their titles were reattached to their records and they were assigned the X311 pressmark that they still have today. This art historical approach to photographs, which still persists in the museum, prizes maker and title above other characteristics. In an article entitled 'One Hundred Years of Photography', Gibbs-Smith noted that 'practically nobody takes the trouble to collect old photographs, and yet the time has already come when they are *objets d'art*'.[33] The classification of Cameron's photographs during Gibbs-Smith's tenure at the V&A reflected the growing tendency he described towards identifying photographs as works of art. Having followed a surprising institutional

trajectory, in which Cameron's aspirations for her photographs to function as works of High Art were suppressed, yet her desire to make her work accessible to artists was fulfilled, Cameron's photographs finally settled into a place within the museum that is recognizable today.

The V&A's photography collection, like those of most art museums, contains numerous examples of photographs originally created for use in other spheres that are now studied and displayed as works of art. These include records of art and architecture, documentations of geological surveys, ethnographic portraits and family snapshots, to name but a few genres. While art historians and museum professionals have long been aware of the pitfalls of recontextualizing such photographs in the art museum, they have paid much less attention to the institutional status of photographs that were originally made as works of art. The unexpected path of Julia Margaret Cameron's photographs within the South Kensington Museum demonstrates the need for further study of the place of art photography in nineteenth-century museums.

Juliet Hacking provided invaluable support during the preparation of this essay. I thank her and Joanne Lukitsh for their ongoing encouragement and collaboration. I am also grateful to my V&A colleagues Erika Lederman and Ella Ravillious, both of whom generously shared aspects of their doctoral research with me.

Notes

1 Rosalind Krauss, 'Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape/View', *Art Journal* 42, no. 4 (Winter 1982): 311–19, 313.

2 Letter from Julia Margaret Cameron to Sir John Herschel, 31 December 1864, Heinz Archive and Library, National Portrait Gallery, London. Reproduced in Colin Ford, *The Cameron Collection: An Album of Photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron Presented to Sir John Herschel* (Wokingham: Van Nostrand Reinhold in association with the National Portrait Gallery, London, 1975), 140–1. Original emphasis.

3 For a list of exhibitions, see Julian Cox and Colin Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron: The Complete Photographs* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum in association with The National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford, England 2003), 538–44. For a full account of the acquisition of Cameron's photographs by the South Kensington Museum, see Marta Weiss, *Julia Margaret Cameron: Photographs to Electrify You with Delight and Startle the World* (London: MACK in association with V&A Publishing, 2015).

4 A. H. Wall, 'Practical Art Hints: A Critical Review of Artistic Progress in the Domain of Photographic Portraiture', *British Journal of Photography* 12 (3 November 1865), 557–9, 558.

5 T. C. Grove, *Report on Photograph Section*, 12 June 1908. V&A Archive, ED 84/85, Minutes of the Committee on Rearrangement.

6 A printed index, *National Art Library Photographs: Photographic Studies for Drawing, Painting, Etc.* was produced around 1901. Object number 45154 is listed here as 'Child, sleeping; and mother; study of heads of'. A bound volume entitled *Photographs Classification*, from about 1920, lists thirty-nine classes of photographs,

from 'Anatomy' (Class I) to 'Mural painting' (Class XXXVIIII). Both documents are now held in the Word & Image Department, Victoria and Albert Museum.

7 I am grateful to Ella Ravillious for sharing this information, as well as drawing my attention to the indexes noted above.

8 Letter from Julia Margaret Cameron to Henry Cole, 20 May 1865, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, MSL/1934/3537/8/2/1/1.

9 'To Mrs Camerons [*sic*] at Little Holland House to have my portrait photographed in her style. A German girl held an umbrella over me.' Henry Cole diary, 19 May 1865, National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum, MSL/1934/4142.

10 These were the headings Cameron inscribed on the contents page of an album she presented on 5 August 1865 to the banker and art collector Lord Overstone. The album contains many of the same images collected by the South Kensington Museum and is now in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

11 The prices ranged from 5 to 10 shillings each. The Library Receiving Room Diaries are now held in the Victoria and Albert Museum Archive and the Photographs Acquisition Register is located in the Word & Image Department, Victoria and Albert Museum.

12 While the first batch, comprised mainly of Madonnas, along with a few other Biblical, literary and allegorical subjects, contained no portraits, the subsequent groups were a mix of portraiture and costumed or narrative scenes.

13 Photographs Acquisition Register, Word & Image Department, Victoria and Albert Museum.

14 Mark Haworth-Booth points out that there were many higher-profile works on display at the South Kensington Museum at the time, including the Raphael tapestry cartoons, lent by Queen Victoria. Mark Haworth-Booth, *Photography: An Independent Art* (London: V&A Publications, 1997), 81–2.

15 V&A Archive, MA/4/2, Correspondence abstracts and registers: registered papers RP/1865/20747. The letters listed in the correspondence abstracts and registers were sent to the museum for official business and were not retained. The letters from Cameron to Henry Cole preserved in the National Art Library were personal letters to Cole and were not registered.

16 Wall, 'Practical Art Hints', 558.

17 Letter from Miss Kate Perry to Mr [William] Brookfield, 33 Hans Place, 3 November 1865, in Charles and Frances Brookfield, *Mrs Brookfield and Her Circle*, vol. II (1848–74) (New York: Scribner, 1905), 515. Cameron's only daughter, Julia Norman, would die in childbirth in 1873.

18 The lack of documentation regarding Cameron's exhibition at the South Kensington Museum in 1865 means that we cannot be sure that it featured photographs from the museum's collection or another selection lent for display.

19 [Anne Isabella Thackeray], 'A Book of Photographs', *Pall Mall Gazette* (10 April 1865): 550–1. Thackeray later reprinted the essay in *Toilers and Spinsters and Other Essays* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1874).

20 Grove, unpaginated.

21 Sykes was given four 'Madonna Groups': *Resting in Hope*, *Kept in the Heart*, *Blessing and Blessed* and *Yet a Little While*. Duplicates of these were also added to the museum's collection. V&A Archive, MA/34/5, Library Receiving Room Diary volume 5.

22 Edward Fox, museum numbers 4049–4980.

23 A review in the 'Fine Arts' column of the *Morning Post* praised the 'grace and fancy and the beauty and variety of poetic sentiment' of Cameron's photographs and said that she had 'carried the art of photography to a more poetic degree of perfection than any other photographer whose works have come under our notice'. 'Mrs Cameron's Photographs', *The Morning Post* (23 December 1865), 5.

24 *For this month of November only, Mrs Cameron's Exhibition of Photographs, 120 Pall Mall* (London 1865).

25 Letter from Julia Margaret Cameron to Jane Senior, 29 June 1865, National Museum of Science and Media, 2001–5059.

26 Coventry Patmore, 'Mrs Cameron's Photographs', *Macmillan's Magazine* no. 13 (January 1866): 230–1, 231.

27 Undated letter from G. F. Watts to Julia Margaret Cameron, Heinz Archive and Library, National Portrait Gallery, NPG P215 (1a/1b/1c). Although Watts has frequently been cast as Cameron's artistic mentor, further exploration of their relationship is needed. Watts did critique the photographs she sent him, but he may also have been inspired by her work. Julia Fagan-King argues persuasively that Watts seems to have based certain paintings on photographs by Cameron. See Julia Fagan-King, 'Cameron, Watts, Rossetti: The Influence of Photography on Painting', *History of Photography* 10, no. 1 (January–March 1986): 19–29.

28 The prices recorded in the Library Receiving Room Diaries match the undiscounted prices listed in the French Gallery catalogue.

29 *Index to the Collection of Photographs in the National Art Library of the South Kensington Museum* (London 1868).

30 Quoted in John Physick, *Photography and the South Kensington Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1975), 5.

31 Grove, unpaginated.

32 *National Art Library Photographs: Photographic Studies for Drawing, Painting, Etc.*

33 Quoted in Haworth-Booth, *Photography: An Independent Art*, 121.

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