

# Bridging the Mediterranean and Gujarat with the Turn of a Page: Picturing the Dimensions of Maritime Travel in an Extra-Illustrated Nineteenth-Century Book about India

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*Nancy Um*

In *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), twenty albumen prints join eight pages of text and ten line-drawn architectural plans, elevations, and details to feature some of the major monuments and historic sites of Gujarat, the northwestern Indian province that has served as one of the region's gateways to the West since the sixteenth century. The book's author, Sir Theodore Cracraft (T. C.) Hope (British, 1831–1915), occupied various positions in India but was best known for his contributions to public works including the expansion of the rail system and the spearheading of agricultural development projects.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, during his early years working at the Education Department in Gujarat, Hope documented and studied local architecture. Thus he may be counted as one of the lesser-known participants in a larger group of pioneering and generally self-selected “British civilians and officers who took up the cause of retrieving India’s ‘lost’ history from the ancient ruins and monuments . . . who also saw themselves as conferring order and system on the modes of studying and interpreting these remains.”<sup>2</sup> Among Hope’s cohorts were widely recognized architectural scholars, such as James Fergusson, with whom Hope collaborated on another volume about Gujarati architecture prior to the 1868 publication.<sup>3</sup> However, in contrast to Fergusson, Hope’s “archaeological hobbies,” as they were referred to in his obituary, only resulted in a handful of publications and received markedly less acknowledgment in the field of architectural history.<sup>4</sup>

In his short textual contribution to the 1868 volume, Hope posits frankly that the monuments of Gujarat, such as the Jami Masjid in Bharuch or the Shiv Mandir Temple in Ambarnath, may not live up to the expectations set by other celebrated Indian landmarks. But at the same time, he suggests that this work provides “an additional link in the chain of the history of early Mahometan building,” thus serving the larger purpose of recording Indian architecture as discrete teleologies circumscribed by religion, a pervasive colonial construct.<sup>5</sup> As Tapati Guha-Thakurta has shown, the development of this vision of Indian architectural history was implicitly linked to changing practices in the representation of monuments. For this reason, photographs, which architectural scholars of India came to use routinely by the 1860s, must also be scrutinized as images in their own right rather than considered only as simple or transparent documentary tools.<sup>6</sup>

The photographs in this volume include expansive views of cities such as Surat



**Fig. 1. Tipped-in photograph of Siva Mahadeva, Elephanta, page: 32 × 39.5 cm.** Photographer unknown. From T. C. Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), affixed by unknown individual opposite pl. 6. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute (96.R.48).

and Bharuch<sup>7</sup> as well as tighter shots of individual monuments that highlight some details of their architectural ornament.<sup>8</sup> Hope did not take these images himself, nor did he rely upon the skills of an established architectural photographer such as Thomas Biggs, who provided the images for the 1866 volume on Ahmedabad that Hope coauthored with Fergusson.<sup>9</sup> Rather, Hope featured images by the Bombay-based commercial studio Lindley and Warren (act. 1863–73). In contrast to the wider-reaching purview of its well-known and extremely successful competitor Bourne and Shepherd, which furnished images for several publications about India, Lindley and Warren was known primarily for its *carte-de-visite* portraits.<sup>10</sup> The Hope volume represents Lindley and Warren's single published attempt at working outside the walls of its Apollo Street studio.

The Getty Research Institute (GRI) is fortunate to own the United States' sole cataloged copy of this rare book.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the GRI example is unique and worthy of note because nineteen additional photographs, some with handwritten labels in English, have been added across from the existing image folios. We do not know who owned this book prior to its acquisition by the GRI in 1996, but the person who added and labeled the photographs was most likely British. For one, the extra images described below sug-



**Fig. 2.** *Colonnade of the Jumna Mosque, Broach [Jami Masjid, Bharuch]*, page: 32 × 39.5 cm. Photo by Lindley and Warren. From T. C. Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), pl. 6. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute (96.R.48).

gest a deep interest in engineering and public works and thus support the notion that the owner may have been, like Hope, a colonial official who spearheaded infrastructure projects in India. As such, the GRI's copy of *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* goes beyond its original purpose of showcasing India's architecture by pointing to the professional preoccupations of a wider class of mobile British officials, whose connections to the colonies could be expressed through the acquisition of images.

The first five of the added photographs comprise Indian subjects and therefore do not appear particularly unusual in the context of the host plates that they face. For instance, a shot of the colossal three-headed rock-cut relief of Siva Mahadeva at Elephanta was added opposite plate 6, which pictures the colonnade of the Jami Masjid in Bharuch (figs. 1, 2). Both images fit together comfortably as paired renderings of historical monuments in western India. Also appearing in the added photographs are more recent constructions, such as the neo-Saracenic Bombay Mechanics' Institute founded by David Sassoon in 1847, with an adjacent hotel in the background, both labeled in pencil. The next two added images—one of an Indian train engine and one depicting a bird's-eye view of rail stretching over mountainous terrain—express an interest in a technology

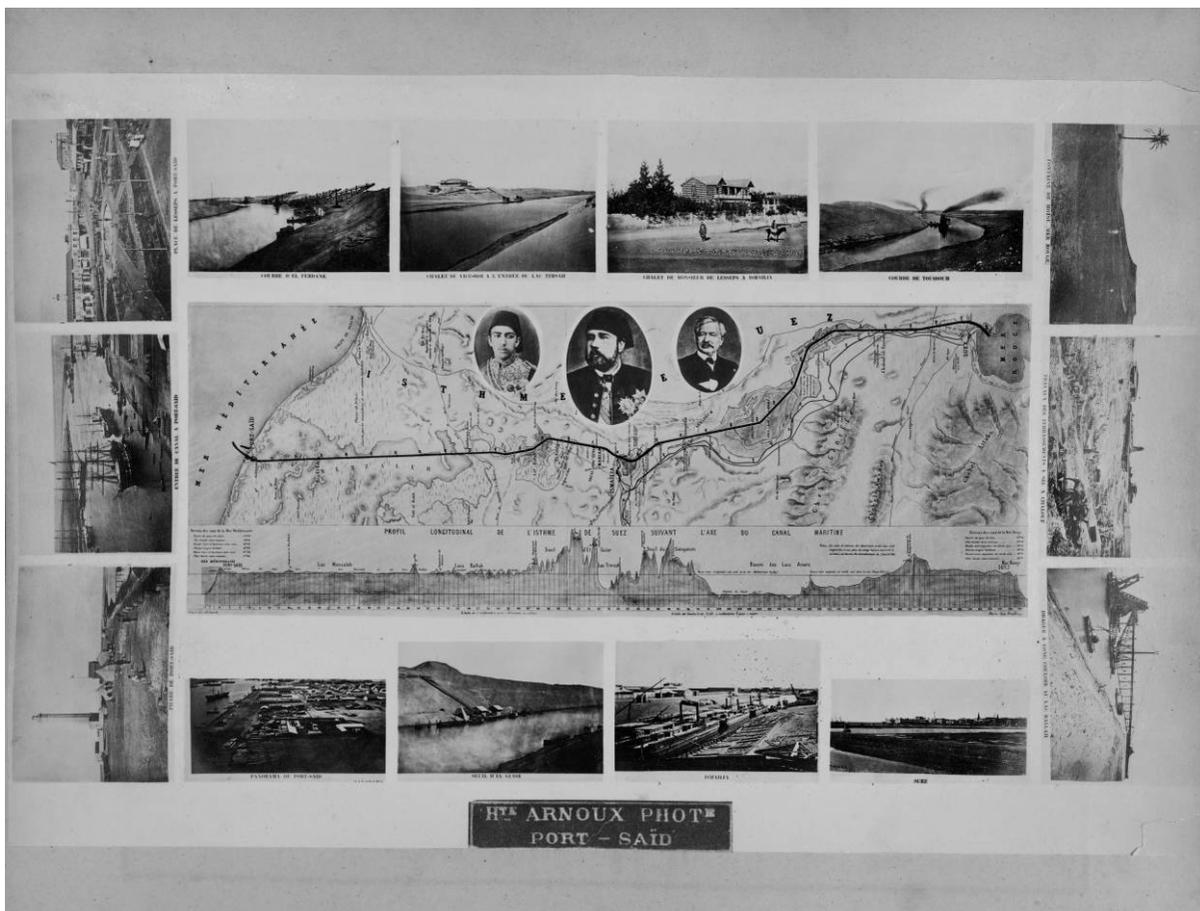
that was still relatively new (India's first passenger train departed Bombay on 16 April 1853). A fifth added image from this initial set depicts a group of well-dressed anonymous children, likely Parsi, posing in a studio.

The fourteen remaining pasted-in pages leap from India to Egypt, which the owner of this volume had likely passed through en route to Asia. As the historian Valeska Huber has shown, perceptions and memories of the maritime passage to the Indian Ocean through Suez were actively mediated and defined by images acquired along the way, such as those added to the GRI volume.<sup>12</sup> The first four of these fourteen photographs feature sites familiar to the foreign visitor, such as the Sphinx and the Pyramids of Giza, followed by an image of a canal and one photograph of Pompey's pillar in Alexandria. The rest showcase various views of the Suez Canal, newly opened in 1869. As with the host plates, a commercial photographer—in this case Hippolyte Arnoux, who operated a studio and floating darkroom in Port Said in the 1860s and 1870s—was responsible for many of the added images of Egypt.

The first such page features a large map and elevation diagram of the canal, with fourteen of Arnoux's photographs as framing elements (fig. 3).<sup>13</sup> Inset within the map, a portrait of Khedive Isma'il, the modernizing Egyptian pasha who oversaw the opening of the canal, is flanked by two smaller portraits: a young man in a fez (possibly Khedive Isma'il's successor Tawfiq Pasha) on the left and Ferdinand de Lesseps, the canal's engineer, on the right. The fourteen thumbnail images, all labeled, encircle this central montage. They include a view of the port of Suez and other well-known stops on the canal's route, such as Lake Timsah and the village of Tusum. Six of these images, including a panorama of Port Said and a shot of de Lesseps's "chalet" in Isma'iliyya, appear again in full size in the volume's later pages. Subsequent photographs that showcase the massive dredgers and elevators (which allowed for the canal's excavation to continue after the shift away from *corvée* labor beginning in 1864<sup>14</sup>) may have also been taken by Arnoux, who documented these engineering tools with great interest (fig. 4).<sup>15</sup>

In this amended book, disparate photographs from Egypt and India have been combined together on the two sides of each folio, thus tightly compressing the connected geographic expanse of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the western Indian Ocean into the narrow span of a single page. The images added to the GRI's volume attest to both the physical connection of previously divided seas as the result of the herculean human and mechanized interventions that led to the creation of the Suez Canal, and to the constant traffic of individual bodies that followed. Indeed, this path between India's west coast and Europe was traveled by countless late nineteenth-century voyagers, including the volume's earlier anonymous owner and certainly Hope himself at some point during his long career. After the completion of the canal's terrestrial slice in 1869, Egypt and India were brought into much closer proximity, thus shrinking the scope of the imperial worldview and curtailing the personal itineraries of British colonial servants.

As described by Huber, images of the Suez Canal quickly became standardized after its opening, thanks to the tightly choreographed itineraries that were dictated in



**Fig. 3. Tipped-in photomontage with images of Port Said and inset map, page: 32 × 39.5 cm.** Photos by Hippolyte Arnoux. From T. C. Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), affixed by unknown individual opposite pl. 12. Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute (96.R.48).



*Dredger & Elevator*

**Fig. 4. Tipped-in photograph, possibly by Hippolyte Arnoux (French, active ca. 1860–ca. 1890).**

Dredger and elevator on the Suez Canal, page: 32 × 39.5 cm. From T. C. Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), affixed by unknown individual opposite pl. 16.

Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute (96.R.48).

guidebooks from the time and to the widely disseminated and relatively formulaic commercial photographs of Arnoux and of Constantin and George Zangaki, Arnoux's cohorts in Port Said.<sup>16</sup> As such, many European travelers going to or returning from India inevitably included in their photo albums a few of Arnoux's shots from Suez, which was a notable interlude along the extended east-west journey, particularly when it was still novel in the 1870s and 1880s.<sup>17</sup> Yet the GRI's extra-illustrated printed book is distinct from those personal albums because of its original theme, the monuments of Gujarat. These added images, then, expand the reach of these monuments beyond their landed homes, situating them within an increasingly wider geographic continuum.

With its visual modifications, the GRI's copy of *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* tells two parallel and linked stories about the British colonial encounter. One recounts the firsthand experience of India's historic cultures hewn in stone, witnessed precisely when the British were engaging in significant efforts toward the subcontinent's modernization. The other is about the act of maritime travel as a deeply accumulative visual practice, constituted by endless days on the open seas but often encapsulated

in pictures of key landed sites that were witnessed along the way. As such, the extra-illustrated Hope volume posits a role for mobile British officials that went beyond the administration and control of far-flung sites in an expanded colonial world, where various technologies aided in rendering the empire manageable: canals, railways, and new educational institutions. The GRI's embellished copy suggests that this well-traveled group must also be seen as producers, conveyors, assemblers, and interpreters of images that they acquired and, at least in this case, combined in striking and meaningful ways.

This unique copy of the Hope volume inspires the viewer to look more closely at the project of commercial photography in sites such as India and Egypt, considering the dissemination, consumption, and reframing of these widely dispersed and endlessly reproducible images. Moreover, it suggests fruitful paths for future researchers who are encouraged to consider the visual dimensions of an oft-traveled sea itinerary at a moment when the temporal and spatial nature of maritime travel had changed considerably.

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1. Hope received notable honors for his service in India. He was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India (KCSI) and Companion of the Indian Empire (CIE). “Death of Sir T. Hope: Thirty-five Years Work for India,” *Times of London*, 6 July 1915, 6.
2. Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 3.
3. T. C. Hope and James Fergusson, *Architecture at Ahmedabad, Capital of Goozerat, Photographed by Colonel Biggs* (London: J. Murray, 1866).
4. “Death of Sir T. Hope,” 6. Hope published two other archaeological books: *Report on the Broach Exhibition, 1868–69* (Bombay: Printed at the Education Society’s Press, 1869) and *Inscriptions in Dharwer and Mysore* (London: Printed for the Committee of Architectural Antiquities of Western India, 1866). His later publications turned to religion: *Church and State in India* (London: Rivington’s, 1885); *The Missionary Influence of the National Life of England* (London: Bemrose and Sons, 1894); and, with A. F. Eden, “The Hope-Eden Draft Bill,” in *The Religious Question in Public Education: A Critical Examination of Schemes Representing Various Points of View*, ed. Athelstan Riley, Sir Michael Ernest Sadler, and Cyril Jackson (New York: Longmans, Green, 1911), 24–60.
5. T. C. Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities of Goojerat* (Bombay: Oriental Press, 1868), 8.
6. Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories*, 5, 19.
7. See Hope, *Surat, Broach, and Other Old Cities*, pls. 1 and 4.
8. The only exception is plate 17, which features a cotton cart under some trees in an unnamed location and thus, being a genre scene, diverges from the others.
9. Hope and Fergusson, *Architecture at Ahmedabad*.
10. Examples of these *carte-de-visite* images can be found in the British Library; the King’s Own Royal Regiment Museum in Lancaster, England; and the National Gallery of Australia.
11. Other copies can be found in Paris, London, and Basel (where it is miscataloged as *Surat, Broach and Other Old Cities of Coojarat [sic]*).

12. Valeska Huber, *Channeling Mobilities: Migration and Globalisation in the Suez Canal Region and Beyond, 1869–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 58–71.

13. Arnoux produced more than one version of this photomontage from Suez. Other versions combine maps of the canal with portraits of historical figures and some ethnographic types, along with views of sites along the canal. For example, see *Canal Maritime du Suez*, an albumen print in the Basel Mission Archives (1881–1910); and Photo 96/1 (60), Crofton Collection, and Photo 148/(97) from the Album of views mostly in Burma and India, both in the British Library.

14. The Egyptian peasantry was commonly mobilized to support large-scale public works projects on a seasonal basis. When he took the throne and began to oversee the canal project in 1864, Khedive Isma'il shifted away from these long-standing practices of *corvée* labor and brought in a new workforce. Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 29.

15. For example, Nissan Perez has confirmed that a photograph of an elevator, similar to the one added opposite plate 15, is also by Arnoux. Nissan N. Perez, *Focus East: Early Photography in the Near East (1839–1885)* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 111, pl. 98. Many similar images can be found in other albums. Some were published in *Hippolyte Arnoux: Photographe de l'union des mers* (Paris: Centre Historique des Archives Nationales, 1996).

16. Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 58–71. Arnoux and the Zangaki brothers worked together to stage the Suez Canal Company pavilion at the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1889, but later Arnoux accused the brothers of usurping his work. Irini Apostolou, “Photographes français et locaux en Orient méditerranéen au XIXe siècle,” *Bulletin du Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem* 24 (2013), <http://bcrfj.revues.org/7008>.

17. According to Huber, commercial images such as Arnoux's were superseded as early as the 1890s, when travelers began to bring their own personal cameras on the Suez journey. See Huber, *Channeling Mobilities*, 66. Comparable albums that feature both India and Suez include Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. D. Reilly Collection, Album of views in India, England and the Middle East (ca. 1880–90) and Photograph album of Lieutenant-Colonel John Whaley Watson, Bombay Army (ca. 1870–80), both in the British Library; and Views of India, Malaysia, Burma, Egypt, Singapore, and England plus some group portraits, etc., in the J. Paul Getty Museum Collection (84.XA.875.16).