

CHAPTER ONE

Empire tours: royal travel between colonies and metropolises

Robert Aldrich and Cindy McCreery

Royals have always been a peripatetic species. In the Ancient world, Hadrian spent more than half of his reign travelling the Roman empire, from Britain to the Black Sea to Egypt. When monarchs still led their forces into battle, as did St Louis during the Crusades and as did other medieval and early modern kings, travel to battlefields abroad was necessarily part of the 'job'. With great pageantry and festivity, 'royal entries' marked the arrival of sovereigns into the major cities of their own realms. Emperor Charles V travelled ceaselessly through his domains in the Iberian peninsula, Low Countries, Burgundy and central Europe. Queen Elizabeth I of England made royal 'progresses' from one town and estate to another, sometimes bankrupting her fortunate or unfortunate hosts. Tsar Peter the Great left imperial Russia, still an exotic, distant and, in Western eyes, near barbaric kingdom, for a 'grand embassy' that took him to Vienna, Amsterdam and London. Neither Charles nor Elizabeth, however, visited their possessions in the New World, nor did Peter make it to the far reaches of his continental empire.

Non-European royals travelled less extensively. Rulers of China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam traditionally remained immured in their forbidden cities, though Mughal rulers on the Indian subcontinent and Moroccan sultans, like early modern European counterparts, regularly moved the court around their territories, and Ottoman and Persian rulers made visits to neighbouring states. However, Hindu sovereigns faced the loss of caste purity if they crossed the 'black waters', until maharajas breached that interdiction in the second half of the nineteenth century.

A few non-Western royals travelled to Europe in the early modern period. Franciscan missionaries escorted two princes from Ceylon to Portugal at the end of the 1500s; the 'Black Prince', Dom João, took the

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name of the Portuguese king when he was baptised, and he had a church constructed on the outskirts of Lisbon. A French cleric accompanied Prince Nguyen Phuc Canh, son of the ruler of Vietnam, to France in 1787. The youthful prince was received by King Louis XVI, had his portrait painted and was the darling of the Versailles court, although hopes for an alliance between the two kingdoms and conversion of the Vietnamese dynasty to Christianity came to nought. In between those two visits, numerous 'princes' landed in Europe, though in a period when knowledge of distant countries was vague, and titles were far from standardised and often contested, almost any traveller might be gratified with a royal title. Pocahontas, the daughter of a Native American chief – converted to Christianity and married to an Englishman – arrived in London in 1606, and was paraded around by the Virginia Company as a princess of the Powhatan empire. Subsequent 'royal' visitors to Europe included four 'Indian Kings' who visited England in 1700, a 'Prince of Timor' who travelled to the Netherlands, Britain and Canada at mid-century, and the Polynesian 'princes' Aoutourou and Omai who returned to Europe with Louis-Antoine Bougainville and James Cook.¹

In the nineteenth century, royals began to travel more frequently and more widely, thanks in part (as will be discussed) to innovations in transport. European monarchs met for 'summits' and called upon one another individually, as seen by the reciprocal visits of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with Emperor Napoléon III and Empress Eugénie. Recreation, affairs of state and family visits by royals married into foreign courts – notably, the progeny of Queen Victoria and of King Christian IX of Denmark, the 'father-in-law of Europe' – kept royals on the move.² By the *fin de siècle*, so many monarchs and their family members passed through France that the government had appointed a full-time official to look after visiting royals.³

The presence of non-Western royals in Europe also became somewhat more frequent, their number including some, such as the famous Sikh maharaja Duleep Singh, who had been dethroned by the British but allowed to settle in Britain.⁴ Among royal or 'semi-royal' visitors in the second half of the nineteenth century were the hereditary prime minister of Nepal, the shah of Persia, the Ottoman sultan, the sultan of Johore, the kings of Zululand, Hawai'i and Siam, and three rulers from Bechuanaland.⁵ For wealthy maharajas, visits to Europe were becoming as significant as the 'Grand Tour' of the European continent had been for the eighteenth-century British elite.⁶ In European capitals, spa towns and Mediterranean resorts, royals were far from uncommon, though they travelled and were accommodated in ways to which commoners were far from accustomed.

Writing the history of royal tours

Royal tours of the 1800s and early 1900s, and since, have created much documentation, perhaps the most obvious record contained in newspapers and magazines, newsreels and then radio and television broadcasts. Royals were (and are) celebrities, their every move shadowed by eager journalists. The press had a field day when royals came to visit, writers and readers fascinated with banquets, ribbon-cuttings and speeches, the clothing and jewellery sported by royals and tittle-tattle about their less public activities. Royal tours have also produced more official accounts by court chroniclers, often published in illustrated commemorative albums. First-person accounts range from diaries written by royals themselves – though these are sometimes closely safeguarded within royal archives, or have been lost – and by those who accompanied or came into contact with them.

Images constitute particularly important documentation. Image, after all, was a key ingredient in the popularity (or lack of it) of royal personages, with tours carefully arranged for maximum exposure of the visitors. The invention of photography, and development of cameras that could be used by amateurs – royals and others – made possible posed, official and informal shots. These provide not just portraits of individuals, but portrayals of the panoply of celebrations and decorations. How various groups are depicted, from royal parties to ‘natives’ and commoners, gives insight into social hierarchies and inter-communal relations, and to the changing ways in which tours were staged and received. They occasionally also give evidence of opposition to the royal presence.

The material culture of visits provides further sources. Tours generally involved gift exchange, from precious presentation objects offered to royals to ethnographic ‘curios’ (in the language of the colonial age), many of these artefacts are now housed in museums and royal collections. There are, as well, elaborately crafted proclamations, medals and awards, and more quotidian items, including in recent times the huge array of souvenirs that help market the monarchy.⁷ Left behind in the places visited are buildings the royals opened, statues they unveiled, plaques erected in their honour, and various other public and private ‘relics’.

Libraries, museums and private collections, and even landscapes, thus abound with evidence of royal tours. Archival documents provide details on their organisation and execution, budgets, transport, protocol, timetables, banquets and ceremonies, programmes for gala performances, and the often large cast of characters who accompanied royal visitors or who were involved in the caravans, as well as

information on luggage, conveyances and travel requisites. Given the wealth of documents it is somewhat surprising that royal tours have until recently commanded relatively little scholarly attention, though the theme is now being addressed in various genres, including new books directed to general readers, among which royalty is a popular subject.⁸ They also include full-scale volumes on tours of particular countries, representative among them Jane Connors's study of royal tours of Australia.⁹ Tours to Canada, South Africa and other parts of the British empire have also been investigated by scholars such as Phillip A. Buckner, who argue that these visits played an important role in consolidating national as well as imperial identities.¹⁰

The literature encompasses studies that specifically situate visits in the context of the history and evolution of 'modern monarchy', international relations and cross-cultural encounters. A pioneering volume published by Johannes Paulmann in 2000 underlined the importance of face-to-face royal encounters in the nineteenth century, when crowned heads reigned in most European countries (and thought of themselves as a majestic 'internationale' bound by heredity, status and intermarriage). Paulmann demonstrated how royal encounters sent strong political signals and provoked diverse responses. He introduced perspectives on 'symbolic politics', and the way that visits represented a 'staging' or 'performance' of monarchies seeking legitimation in the face of growing democratisation, parliamentarianism and challenges to the established order. For the public, the visits were, he added, at the very least 'international variety shows', even when there existed underlying ambivalence about the institution of monarchy itself.¹¹ Paulmann's work has inspired much further research, especially in the field of cultural history, on the monarchs in Germany – thirty-three kings, princes and other royals reigned until their dynasties were all disestablished after 1918, leaving historians a plethora of case studies to investigate.¹²

Not surprisingly the British monarchy has attracted much attention, not least in the countless biographies of royals. Scholars who have contributed to the emergence of a 'new royal history', such as David Cannadine,¹³ have reflected on the constitutional role of royalty, as well as its spectacle, in the 'invention of tradition' and the 'ornamentalist' connections between Britain and its empire. Several works have made royal tours a particular focus. Matthew Glencross's book on the state visits of Edward VII discusses the diplomatic significance of that monarch's travels within Europe.¹⁴ Charles V. Reed's monograph on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British royal tours of empire demonstrates the importance of travel in the performance of both monarchy and imperial identity. Miles Taylor's ongoing research points to the intimate links between Queen Victoria and India, where she sent

several of her sons and grandsons on tour.¹⁵ Sarah Carter and Maria Nugent's edited collection makes clear the importance of Victoria – occasionally incarnated by a touring prince – for Indigenous people such as Aboriginal people in Australia and Maori in New Zealand.¹⁶ For the twentieth century, Philip Murphy's work on the British monarchy and empire has offered a detailed analysis of relations between the crown and colonies in the era of decolonisation, by which time royals were frequent travellers. Murphy has shown how members of the royal family (though never the Queen) were solicited and despatched to independence ceremonies around the empire, concluding with the presence of the Prince of Wales at the handover of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China in 1997.¹⁷ Ian Radforth's study of an earlier Prince of Wales in Canada and the United States in 1860, and volumes edited by Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens on monarchs' heirs, show how succeeding Princes of Wales, and other sons of monarchs – often more frequent travellers than their reigning parents – were sent on 'missions' abroad. Their travels exemplified a brand of personal politics and imperial 'soft diplomacy' increasingly important (not least because of media coverage) from the late 1800s.¹⁸ These works testify to the broad contexts and wide-ranging implications of tours, and their value for an understanding of the dynamics of domestic, international and colonial affairs.

The 'new imperial history', and trends in historical writing that have contributed to a renewal of studies of colonialism, make possible fresh outlooks on monarchy. Royal tourists were prime exemplars of particular races, classes and genders, illustrating three central themes in the new historiography. Contemporary approaches have emphasised that colonising and colonised countries must be considered in the same analytical field, and that links between various colonies are often as significant as those between colonies and metropolises. Tours by roving royals, often visiting multiple colonial sites during the course of their journeys, were manifest ways in which 'home' and 'abroad', mother-country and overseas possessions, occupy connected terrains. Many strategies taken from literary analysis, cultural studies, post-modernism and postcolonialism have been enveloped in the new colonial history. These have encouraged scholars to 'read' various sorts of texts, from printed materials to images, and to examine the reception of these texts, and royal tours provide a panorama of words and pictures. They have also pointed out the ways in which individuals and groups 'perform' the roles assigned to them or the ones they create for themselves, and a royal tour was, in a very real sense, a performance for both visitors and hosts. Discussion of transnational linkages and cultural hybridities extends to overseas journeys, where festivities

surrounding royals included both European traditions and ones – e.g., ceremonies of greeting, song, dance, art and artisanry – from local societies. In short, general trends in historiography over the past several decades beneficially influence the way royal tours can now be studied (as the chapters in this volume testify), and research on such journeys also contributes original perspectives to the new imperial history.

European royals in the colonies

Our earlier edited volume on *Crowns and Colonies* identified many constitutional, personal and cultural ties between monarchies, states and subjects in colonial situations.¹⁹ The present volume takes up the theme of royal tours, which figured in several chapters of that collection. Royal tours became, from the late 1800s, a primary strategy through which imperial paramountcy was projected in the colonies, feudatory obeisance to imperial authority was reflected, and mutual recognition between rulers of European nations and still independent overseas states was symbolised. The theme extends far beyond the British empire, and the cases contained here explore travels by continental European and British royals, and by Indigenous monarchs and their representatives as well. Comings and goings undertaken by sovereigns, their kin and their deputies moving between imperial centres and peripheries, and between Europe and Asia or Africa, offer a significant lens through which to view modern monarchy, cultural exchange, international relations, imperialism and decolonisation.

Visits by royals to the overseas possessions of their own and other countries, by vassal monarchs from protectorates to imperial metropolises, and by royals from countries hoping to stave off colonial takeover, we argue, were a vital, and largely new, aspect of high imperialism from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. Tours expressed and promoted royal and imperial authority, though in some instances they revealed resistance against expansionist designs. They affirmed the legitimacy, status and privileges of dynasties, even those whose thrones had come under an onslaught by conquering armies and navies bent on annexing territory, proclaiming protectorates or ‘opening’ foreign countries to commerce and ‘Western civilisation’. Tours developed a personal relationship between sovereign and colonial subjects: vice-regal officials, settlers, Indigenous peoples and diasporic migrants. They were intended to foster familiarity with distant places and cultures for populations back at home. They brought a sovereign, or kinsman of a sovereign, across the world, in flesh and blood, and put him on show in a theatre of pomp and ceremonial. Tours underlined the political role of dynasties and the might (and at times weakness) of their countries, but

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they also revealed and affirmed the emotional, mystical and spiritual character of the monarchy itself. The monarch (or a scion) stood at the apex of an entire political, social and cultural order, and that order, and not just the traveller alone, was on display.

For overseas territories where a 'protected' monarchy or princely dynasty had been retained, generally stripped of real power though perhaps still treated with deference, tours showed who was 'boss', and how the rights of a paramount ruler overrode those of 'underlords'. If an Indigenous monarchy had been abolished, tours emphasised how the imperial ruler had taken over the rights and privileges of a defunct dynasty: the imperial monarch as supreme military and political authority, arbiter of justice, patron of the arts, fount of honours. Tours showed off the might and majesty of monarchy. They testified to the unification of disparate territories into a single colony, and of varied colonies into a great empire. The tours aimed to procure the allegiance of the peoples over whom the monarch reigned, and his or her colonial government ruled, as well as opportunities to counter resistance, disloyalty and moves towards autonomy or independence. At the same time, somewhat paradoxically, they provided recognition and status for maharajas, sultans and other loyal Indigenous rulers who had kept their thrones after foreign takeover. Visits to historical and contemporary sites of cultural expression (most obviously, places of worship) acknowledged 'native' traditions but also indicated how they had been brought under the guardianship – or, to be more critical, how these traditions had been appropriated – by colonial masters.

The royal visitor was the central actor in a tour, but was surrounded by an entourage of other people and a store of paraphernalia that played essential roles. Ministers and government officials from the capital conferred with vice-regal authorities, representatives of settler populations, and elders and chiefs of 'native' peoples. Like the royals, they engaged in 'fact-finding' about natural resources, economic development, political and social issues. Journalists, who made up a significant contingent in many later tours, reported on ceremonies and speeches, gauged the reception given to the visitors, and wrote about curious sites and people they discovered. Military and naval officers – and especially the warships in which the royal party often travelled – proclaimed the firepower of the colonising country for conquest of new territories, 'pacification' of those over which flags had already been raised, and defence against enemies and rivals in the imperial scrambles. Ordinary sailors kept the fleet shipshape, and were deployed as muscled exemplars of the bravery and bravura of European manhood. Maids and valets ensured that royal personages were suitably caparisoned in the appropriate uniforms, medals and sashes, fashionable top-hats and

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frock-coats. In the visitor's voluminous baggage were packed not only countless changes of clothing and other travel needs, but gifts to be offered, decorations to be awarded, standards to be unfurled, portraits to be circulated. The ships (and trains) on which royals travelled served as mobile palaces, and the government houses and hotels in which they lodged became temporary courts. Not just a royal visitor, but the institution of monarchy had come to town.

An individual visit thus played on the emotional, cultural, 'spectacular' and mystical aura of the monarchy, and the show played itself out before various publics. The royal tourist was visiting kinsmen and compatriots bound by the 'crimson thread' of imperial bloodlines and heritage. There were also non-Europeans now bound, willingly or not, by imperial dominion and, in principle, the promises of the civilising mission. The royal's visit provided an opportunity to show off to the travelling party, and to the world, the achievements of empire-builders, to proclaim the loyalty but also to present the grievances of settler populations, and to exhibit 'native' peoples and cultures. Locals had an opportunity to advertise themselves, whether different Indigenous 'tribes' and ethnic communities, specific cities or provinces within a colony or colonial federation, various civic and voluntary associations, individual businesses or chambers of commerce and industry. A chance to present themselves (in a very real sense) to a royal, even for a brief moment, allowed a group to enhance its status, express its remonstrations, show off its accomplishments or simply mark out its place in a colonial society.

Some tours took on special significance. The visits of Emperor Napoléon III to Algeria were the first and only ones by a reigning French monarch, and 'first visits' by a royal, particularly a sovereign, enjoyed a particularly memorable status. In 1874 King Christian IX undertook the first visit by a Danish monarch to Iceland, marking the millennium of Danish settlement, but it was also the occasion to issue a new constitution for the island. The Delhi durbar of 1911 marked one of the most important moments in British rule of India, when King George V and Queen Mary were crowned emperor and empress, and received feudatory royals from throughout the subcontinent, the king of Bhutan and Shan princes from Burma. Never before or after did the Raj see such an imposing manifestation of British paramountcy and royal splendour.²⁰

One royal visit could lead to others, often following a template established by initial visits, encompassing the same sights and festivities. Such visits became almost routine by the mid-twentieth century, but they still were potent moments in colonial and national histories – perhaps no more pointedly than when a visiting royal presided over a ceremony where a colony assumed its independence.

'Native' monarchs in imperial capitals

Tours by 'native' monarchs from Africa, Asia and Oceania presented, arguably, an even more complex scenario than those by Europeans. Rulers of still independent non-Western states who went to Europe were aiming to prevent the conquest of their countries by expanding colonial powers. Thus the Ottoman sultan, the Persian shah and the Siamese king were intent on affirming the sovereignty of their states, being treated as equals by fellow royals and the governments in Europe, and portraying themselves as competent and modernising rulers. If a country had already become a protectorate of a European state, a royal visit was generally intended – as was the case for Indian maharajas, Malay sultans and royals from French Indochina – to pledge the allegiance of a vassal sovereign to the paramount colonial power, and equally importantly, to affirm the status and residual powers of his dynasty.

Europeans viewed visitors from afar with great fascination, as well as with racialised stereotyping. Somewhat paradoxically, the 'native' princes gained credit for appearing exotic but were also expected to show themselves, in their behaviour and interests, to have become Europeanised (and thus 'civilised') gentlemen. This was a difficult balancing act, for instance, when a ruler with multiple wives visited a Christian country. European hospitality did not accord with certain taboos on food and drink – Muslim rulers generally did not drink alcohol, and one Indian prince insisted on shipping his own drinking water to Europe. Whether to wear 'native' or European clothing was always a question; the minders of the visiting Cambodian king in France suggested that crowds preferred for him to be dressed in Asian style. Social practices in which some visitors might have acceptably engaged at home – for instance, chewing betel-nut and expectorating the residue – hardly conformed to European etiquette.

Tours by non-Western royals always attracted great publicity, sometimes even more than the travels of European royals, but they achieved mixed outcomes. Two examples provide illustrations. Neil Parsons has studied one tour which scored considerable success, the 1895 visit to Britain by three 'kings' or 'chiefs' from Bechuanaland, over which London had declared a protectorate a decade earlier. The kings set out to argue against Cecil Rhodes's designs to annex Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony, exploit its mineral resources and use the territory to launch an attack on the Transvaal. Khama, Sebele and Bathoen were committed Christians – Sebele had been baptised by Dr David Livingstone – and were teetotallers. Nonconformist ministers organised their tour, and

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the Africans received rapturous welcomes in Nonconformist chapels and the meeting-halls of temperance unions. Queen Victoria graciously received the visitors, all attired in natty tailored suits, and presented Bibles. In part because of the warm reception, the government decided against annexation of Bechuanaland, and it remained a protectorate until the 1960s.²¹

Less successful was the European tour of Nasr Allah Khan, second son of the emir of Afghanistan, also in 1895. The emir hoped the tour would lead to closer direct diplomatic relations with Britain and thereby cut out the 'middle man' (the Government of India) and preserve the independence of a country in which Britain had regularly intervened since the mid-nineteenth century. According to a detailed Afghan account, the prince toured predictable sites, including the Tower of London ('the residence of the former shahs of England') and Buckingham Palace (where he 'took tea and fruit' as refreshments); he visited P&O ships, the Armstrong munitions factory, and manufacturing plants in London, Leeds, Birmingham, Liverpool and Newcastle. He was received by Queen Victoria, and attended the Ascot races with the Prince of Wales. But, according to European accounts, the prince looked bored throughout much of his tour, and compounded this error by outstaying his welcome. The day he left London for Paris, the *New York Times* printed the news under the headline 'At Last the Shahzada Goes Away'.²²

In the absence of personal visits, rulers of non-Western countries often despatched embassies to Europe. The sultan of Morocco sent a delegation to Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 with proposals for a military alliance between the two countries (and Holland) against Spain. Though this did not eventuate, the visit to London and tour around England inaugurated a period of friendly relations, and may well have inspired Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, written six months after the embassy. In the early 1600s, an East Indian sultan was represented by a legation sent to Holland, a royal tour – as Jean Gelman Taylor suggests – 'by proxy'. In the 1680s, the king of Siam sent an embassy to Louis XIV, returning a visit by a delegation that the Sun King had sent to Siam. The Siamese carried a letter from their king, contained in a silver casket; the missive was a royal object, carried from ship to shore aboard a special barge. The Siamese delegates made obeisance to the letter and, so revered was it because of the royal provenance, that they objected when it was placed in a room on a lower floor than their own accommodation. Another grand Siamese embassy, to the court of Napoléon III almost two hundred years later, was followed by embassies from Burma and Japan in the 1870s. The ambassadors leading such delegations were personal representatives of their countries' monarchs, often bearing extravagant

gifts (such as a jewel-encrusted girdle offered by the Burmese to Queen Victoria). The representatives of Asian monarchs were treated much as if they were royals: received in audience by the monarchs who hosted them, shown the sites, entertained at banquets and receptions, awarded decorations and given presents, and accorded honour guards and gun salutes.²³ Such embassies deserve further scholarly attention in the context of royal tours and in the history of monarchy.

Gender in royal travel

Royal tours can be 'read' in many different ways – for example, in terms of 'staging' and monarchical self-presentation, geopolitical significance and public reception. Gender represents another important aspect for consideration. Most of the royal tourists to and from colonies in the late 1800s and early 1900s were men. This is not surprising, since most monarchs were male – and the two most powerful queens, Victoria of Britain and Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, did not visit their overseas possessions. Rulership, in general, was considered a manly occupation, and in some countries, law and custom prohibited women from acceding to thrones. Many of the travelling 'heirs and spares' were military officers, a career reserved to men. Indeed, for the princes, overseas travel served as a rite of masculine passage, an opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of sailors, officials and male colonists. Colonial travel also allowed them to escape the parental eye and avail themselves of high life and low life overseas. Most royal tours thus boasted a distinctly manly ethos, with such leisure pursuits as big-game hunting and outings to gentlemen's clubs and, on occasion, to bordellos.

Women, however, were not absent from royal travel. In the 1850s, for instance, Crown Prince Leopold of Belgium and his wife, Crown Princess Marie Henriette, went on a belated honeymoon to the Levant. The French Empress Eugénie accompanied her husband to Algeria in 1860, the new British monarch, George V, and his consort, Queen Mary, toured India together in 1911 and the Italian king and queen, Vittorio Emanuele III and Elena, went to Africa in the 1930s. Female royals even journeyed alone, as when the widowed former Empress Eugénie went to South Africa to see where her only son had been killed. Another ex-monarch, the unmarried Queen Ranavalona III of Madagascar, made regular visits to Paris and provincial spa towns (accompanied by an aunt and an orphaned great-niece she had adopted) after she was dethroned and exiled to Algeria in the late 1890s. Queen Emma of Hawai'i had gone to Britain and the United States in 1865, and the Indian Begum of Bhopal in 1863–1864 undertook a pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Mecca, accompanied by a retinue of a thousand people.²⁴

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Other women figured prominently in royal entourages. Particularly notable was a troupe of Khmer dancers, under the supervision of a princess, who journeyed with the Cambodian king to France in 1906, to the great delight of French audiences. Women in host countries were active as spectators, participants and organisers of levees, banquets, theatrical performances and religious services. Wives of vice-regal officials carried out duties as hosts and public figures. Females as eagerly as males vied with each other for invitations in the social whirl, and newspapers never failed to mention the women's elegant gowns and sparkling jewellery at the galas. The place of women in royal tours deserves further attention, especially as royal female travellers of the early twentieth century foreshadowed such celebrated later ones as Queen Elizabeth II and Diana, Princess of Wales.

Gender, of course, is not a question simply of men and women, but also of the ways that particular societies (and groups and individuals within them) think about masculinity and femininity. This becomes very evident in royal tours, where male royals were expected to wear uniforms bespeaking martial training and character, and pursue avocations that testified to courage, boldness, athletic prowess and fortitude. These European virtues were sometimes implicitly or explicitly contrasted with what was perceived as a certain effeminacy of Asian men clothed in flowing silks or skirt-like sarongs, bedecked with jewellery and supposedly prey to vice, or with Africans thought to possess unbridled lust, a sanguinary propensity to violence and a lack of 'civilised' behaviour. Similarly, royal women travellers were held to incarnate idealised European feminine traits of respectability, monogamy, domesticity and poise that distinguished them from the dubious morals and suspect deportment of 'native' women. Journalists' descriptions, royal tourists' reminiscences and images produced during tours reveal the 'performance' of gender in both public and private activities, and in perceptions of travellers and the various groups of 'natives', settlers and diasporic communities that received them.

The risks and rewards of royal tours

All was not smooth sailing for royal tourists. Travel, especially to distant destinations, was fraught with danger. There were the hazards to health and comfort during long voyages, different climates, unfamiliar food, contagious diseases and fatigue – the same problems faced by every traveller. Even royals were subject to the vagaries of weather, rough seas, missed connections, breakdowns in equipment and the need to rearrange schedules at the last moment (with consequent disappointment for those whose reception had been cancelled or whose town had

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been deleted from the itinerary). There was tedious protocol and the punishing schedules to which they were often subjected.

Security was a major concern, especially as anarchist terrorism and violent nationalism spread in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Several royals were victims while away from home: Empress 'Sisi' of Austria assassinated by an anarchist in Geneva in 1898, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie felled in Sarajevo in 1914, and King Alexander I of Yugoslavia murdered in Marseille in 1934. (Among other kings assassinated in their home countries in the three decades after 1881 were the Russian tsar, the kings of Italy, Serbia and Greece, and the king and crown prince of Portugal. Republicans were not exempt, as shown with the murder of presidents of France and the United States.) Though attacks on travelling royals, in fact, were generally avoided, notable exceptions were an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Prince Alfred, the son of Queen Victoria, by a would-be Irish nationalist in Sydney in 1868, and an attack on the Russian tsarevitch (the future Tsar Nicholas II) on a visit to Japan in 1891 (with the sabre wielded by the would-be assassin deflected by the cane of the quick acting Prince George of Greece and Denmark, the Russian's cousin and travel companion).

Tours were also threatened with disruption by political protests or marred with lapses of protocol. When one Indian maharaja turned his back on King George V at the Delhi durbar of 1911, the British press trumped up the minor incident into a case of heinous *lèse-majesté*. A durbar projected for King-Emperor George VI after he ascended the British throne in 1936 was aborted when the Indian National Congress called for a boycott, and diasporic Indians demanded the boycott of a royal visit to South Africa on the eve of Indian independence in 1947. Fractious debates in chancelleries and parliaments took place over the advisability of royal tours, for instance, on the first overseas trip made by a senior Japanese royal, the heir apparent and future Emperor Hirohito, in 1921. A visit to southern Africa by the Portuguese crown prince in 1907 could not stifle rising republicanism at home, and prevent the declaration of a republic in Portugal in 1910. (The South African, Japanese and Portuguese cases are discussed in chapters of this volume.)

Whenever a tour was planned, there was some concern that a royal might meddle in foreign policy matters better left to ministers and diplomats. The prolonged absence of a monarch or crown prince also posed a danger. There were questions about whether the traveller would 'perform' well and be appropriately received, and in the case of princes barely out of their teens, whether they had sufficient maturity and gravitas to carry out their duties. *Faux pas*, especially with journalists

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1.1 Portuguese Crown Prince Luís Filipe on tour with colonial authorities in Johannesburg, South Africa, 1907

intent on good copy, could make them laughing-stocks and risk cordial relations with hosts. There were always fears that receptions overseas might be less than enthusiastic, or even hostile.

Partly because of risks and reservations, long-distance travel by European monarchs and other royals really emerged as a phenomenon only in the mid-1800s. There were, nevertheless, a few earlier exceptions. One pioneering royal traveller, already briefly mentioned, was the future King Leopold II of the Belgians. As heir to the throne, Leopold made several trips from the mid-1850s to the early 1860s around the Mediterranean, including visits to Ottoman Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Turkey, as well as to Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece. In 1864–1865 he travelled even further, visiting Ceylon, India, Burma, Sumatra, Hong Kong and Canton. In public, Leopold's delicate health was often cited as the reason for his tours; in private his 'obsession to travel' was bemoaned by ministers and by his father, the king. But this obsession had a clear goal; in North Africa as well as in Asia, Leopold carefully studied the ways in which the British, French and Dutch governed their possessions, and he actively scouted out any opportunities for

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Belgium to acquire colonies. These tours provided the background to Leopold's later acquisition of his own African empire, the Congo Free State.²⁵

A number of developments favoured royal travel to faraway places after mid-century. Interest in 'exotic' overseas destinations increased dramatically, especially with newspaper articles, travelogues and memoirs written by explorers, as well as with national and international expositions held with regularity from the 1850s. Royals were not immune to the general wanderlust pervading Europe. Meanwhile, new types of transport made travel quicker, more comfortable and safer. The rise of steamships from the 1840s, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the spreading web of international railway and telegraph networks by the 1870s all made long-distance journeys more feasible and pleasant. Photography provided a novel avocation for travellers, new medicines served as prophylactics against tropical diseases, and a burgeoning infrastructure (such as hotels) accommodated tourists. By the last decade of the century royals, including non-Westerners, were travelling more regularly around their own regions and much further afield. Their long voyages were punctuated with stops en route. A journey between Europe and Asia indeed required refuelling stops – often in places such as Colombo and Aden – expanding the possibilities for official receptions, pilgrimages, recreation and 'fact-finding'. Before the age of air travel, such sea voyages were virtual international imperial 'progresses' from one colony to another.

The expansion of European colonial empires provided a strengthened imperative for royal tours. European royals considered visits to overseas territories as valuable and indeed necessary to affirm suzerainty over old and new dominions, and the growth of empires, of course, meant that there were more places to visit. Royals joined the increasing number of people going 'out' to the empire, as soldiers and sailors, colonial officials, merchants and missionaries. Some of these remained as settlers, but others served in postings of only a few years or less. Still others, including the ordinary tourists who ventured to colonial destinations as holiday-makers – such as those who joined the Thomas Cook tours begun in the 1870s – intended to spend only a short period abroad. Colonies were crossroads, the lists of arriving passengers in local newspapers ranging from impecunious migrants up to some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in society. Royals could not be left behind, both for their own edification and for reasons of state.

In an earlier age, colonialism was the work of chartered companies such as the East India Company, nominally private enterprises under the aegis of the state. From the mid-nineteenth century (at least, in

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the case of Britain, after the Indian Uprising of 1857), colonialism was a national enterprise, demanding the support and participation of the whole body politic, with all enjoined to contribute to this great project. Yet colonialism never achieved unanimous support, even in Britain, and it was regularly denounced in some sectors for the corruption and enrichment of nabobs and profiteers, the vast cost in money and manpower, the uncertain benefits of taking over sometimes near inaccessible and barren lands, diversion of attention from social issues, overextension of national power, and the potential that colonial rivalries might ignite European wars. Promoters of empire had to strive continuously – through political lobbying, publications, exhibitions and other sorts of propaganda – to popularise colonies among the elite and the masses.

Royals were key agents in the campaign, their support for empire and their imperial forays tactics for galvanising public support. Royal tours, favourably reported in the press, provided an important weapon in the arsenal of propaganda, and royals enjoyed the power and celebrity that made them unparalleled and invaluable assets in efforts to gain and retain an empire. The advent of more extensive royal tours to the colonies coincided not only with imperial expansion, but also with more intense debate about the merits of empire (the critical views famously expressed in Dadabhai Naoroji's 1901 *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, and J.A. Hobson's *Imperialism*, published the following year). At the same time as marshalling support for empire at home, colonialists had to contest embryonic but fast-growing nationalism in the empire, seen with the increasing militancy of the Irish Home Rule movement, the growth of the Indian National Congress founded in 1885 and the setting up of the African National Congress in 1912; Marxist ideas were also beginning to circulate. Debates about empire were taking place at home, in other colonising states and overseas possessions. Royals, self-evidently, represented the institutions of monarchy and the empire; they generally also represented the forces of conservatism against radicalism, and order against revolution. A successful royal tour could thus do much to shore up the established order. For personal as well as political reasons, those of the royal traveller, the colonial lobby and the monarch's loyal subjects at home and abroad, it was worth the risks for them to go on tour, with the hope of reaping the rewards in buttressing the dynasty, the nation and the empire.

Despite the similarities of royal tours, specific objectives varied over the course of the 1800s and early 1900s. As noted, the future king of the Belgians undertook extensive travel to prospect for colonies. Napoléon III travelled to Algeria to reassure settlers of the

monarch's ongoing commitment. Kaiser Wilhelm II, little interested in German colonialism, nonetheless went to the Ottoman empire to boost Germany's and the Hohenzollern dynasty's prestige on the international stage. Crown Prince Luís Filipe's voyage to Africa was intended to distract attention from the unpopularity of the monarchy at home in Portugal. The heir to the Japanese throne went to Europe to show off Japan as a modern country, great power in the concert of nations and legitimate colonial ruler of Taiwan and Korea. Specific goals and more generalised considerations thus mandated tours that were assertions of national power, imperial propaganda and personal adventure by royals. They were also great logistical undertakings.

Planning the tours and receiving the visitors

Royal travel evolved in organisation and arrangement, from the somewhat casual and slapdash arrangement, in the British case, of Prince Alfred's 1860s–1870s colonial tours to the professional and polished stage management of his great-nephew Edward's 1920s travels. In general, organisation improved over time, so that vague itineraries were replaced with precise timetables and choreographed programmes. Still, tours in the early twentieth century closely resembled the formal prototypes set by late nineteenth-century state visits within Europe.²⁶ This continuity is visible, for instance, in the pomp and circumstance of triumphal arches, loyal addresses, levees, balls, religious services, the evening illumination of buildings, firework displays, military reviews and the conferring of honours on local notables. Speeches, banquets, processions and receptions filled the schedule of every tour. There were visits to important historical sites, wonders of nature and infrastructure projects. On the programme as well were meetings with officials and colonists, 'native' representatives and leaders of diasporic populations.

Among key issues that tour organisers had to consider, beyond the central concern of security, was transport. Conveyances needed to move royals about as comfortably and safely as possible, and be grand enough to befit a monarch or prince. Royal conveyances differed, but there existed a noticeable link between royal travel and 'royal' navies. Many royals had a choice between travel in warships, their private yachts or commercial liners. The size and magnificence of vessels commonly increased over time, as national rivalries whetted public appetite for grandiose steamships and splendid private yachts. Royal vessels demonstrated the grandeur of the monarchy and the might of its military and merchant fleet. By 'showing the flag', the ships and royal passengers fulfilled a ceremonial and diplomatic mission. Later,

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royal air travel served as an advertisement for flagship national carriers.

Tours involved serious consideration of the government's priorities in international or colonial policy, which determined even such details as schedules, exacting deployment of security forces, officials and honour guards, and punctilious adherence to protocol. Indeed, protocol was a vital aspect of politics: the pomp of flags, anthems, gun salutes, medals and uniforms clearly indicated the status of visitors and hosts. The particular sites visited and ceremonies held had more to do with *raison d'état* than with visitors' personal proclivities, though royals occasionally managed to escape programmes and minders for improvised sorties, shopping, sport or excursions to 'pleasures quarters'.

If the visitors were the key actors in tours, audiences were integral, and the lack of large and sympathetic, indeed enthusiastic, receptions for a royal meant failure for a tour. Tours were meant to allow a sovereign's subjects (or the residents of an independent country) to see and applaud a royal figure in person. The near-religious persona of a sovereign or prince was what primarily distinguished the visit of a royal from that of a minister, governor, general or 'ordinary' human, no matter his or her stature. In some cultural traditions, as in North Africa and South Asia, indeed, the very sight of a sovereign could confer blessings upon an individual and community. European countries, even a republic like France, also continued to revere royals as icons and gawk at them as celebrities. It was essential that positive receptions – and glowing press reports – overwhelm negative comments or untoward incidents.

Many people, of course, remained largely unaware of or unconcerned by royal tours: those who lived far away from the places the travellers visited, subaltern populations whose lives were little touched by the upper echelons of the national and colonial state, and those who simply took little notice of public affairs. The vast majority of Indians, for example, lived an impossible distance from the site of the Delhi durbars, and most never saw newspapers where these festivities were chronicled (and were unable to read the reports in any case). In Europe and the colonies, some viewed royal tours with, at best, passing curiosity or puzzled bemusement. Nevertheless, the number of participants and spectators in tours, and those who read reports about visits, was substantial, and tours presented unique opportunities for expressions of support and enthusiasm, or hostility. The range of opportunities and responses is indeed what commands attention to royal tours.

Tours in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries provided templates for later and still more frequent travels by royals as well as other heads of state, particularly the presidents who increasingly replaced monarchs. The 'pomp and politics' of presidential visits, in

fact, often closely followed models developed for princely travellers. In today's world, time and distance no longer present the challenges they once held. Jet planes ferry around monarchs and presidents, who fly in and out for sometimes just a few hours, and images of tours are instantaneously broadcast on television and streamed on the internet. Many heads of state, whether royal or republican, are global 'stars', and their travels, in addition to gaining wide media coverage, have considerable political significance and cultural interest. Yet issues around the security of visitors, the design of tours, the ceremonial and protocol, and the reception of travellers by press and public remain as pertinent as they were for the pioneering royal tourists well over a century ago.

The chapters in this volume provide case studies that illustrate multiple sources, methodological approaches and topics in the history of royal travel. Several concern individual tours, while other chapters compare royal travellers or follow a sequence of tours over a shorter or longer period. Three of the chapters focus on the British empire, while the rest look at travels to and from the Belgian, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Portuguese empires, and touch on Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Australasia. Some consider reigning monarchs, others crown princes and members of royal families; the first chapter focuses on deputations and ceremonial gifts of royal tours 'by proxy'. They draw on sources encompassing memoirs and chronicles, press reports, writings inspired by travellers' experiences or provoked by their tours, and a variety of images (etchings, caricatures, photographs), radio broadcasts and film, and material artefacts.

These contributions develop themes introduced in the present chapter, such as the role of royal personalities and their hosts, the political contexts of visits, competing stakes in royal tours, and reactions in the public and press at home and abroad. They show the manifold responses of different individuals and groups, and in different colonies and provinces. The chapters look at the role of particular cohorts, including the military, civic leaders and ethnic communities; they point to questions of gender, age and education. These studies reveal the fragility of monarchical regimes and colonial overlordship that is apparent behind the pageantry and protocol deployed during these travels, and they also evidence the limitations of tours in achieving their core objectives. They identify specific ways in which monarchy and colonialism intertwined, and suggest many avenues for further research – on the travels of members of other dynasties, more recent royal and quasi-royal travel, and the material culture, legacy and memory of royal tours. In turn, the volume demonstrates the benefits of studies bringing together Europe with other parts of the world, and

the significance of travel and tours (not just of the royal variety) in understanding transnational encounters. This book emphasises the role and significance of royal travels, from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s, in transforming monarchies, colonial relations, international politics and cultural exchange.

Notes

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- 2 See, e.g., Michael Nelson, *Queen Victoria and the Discovery of the Riviera* (New York: Tauris Parke, 2007).
- 3 Xavier Paoli, *Their Majesties as I Knew Them: Personal Reminiscences of the Kings and Queens of Europe* (New York: Sturgis & Walton, 1911), the memoirs of the 'kings' guardian'.
- 4 Robert Aldrich, *Banished Potentates: Dethroning and Exiling Indigenous Monarchs under British and French Colonial Rule* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018); Michael Alexander and Sushila Anand, *Queen Victoria's Maharajah: Duleep Singh, 1838–93* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980); and, on the maharaja's formidable daughter, Anita Anand, *Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
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- 7 For example, Cele C. Otnes and Pauline Maclaran, *Royal Fever: The British Monarchy in Consumer Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).
- 8 *The Royal Tour: A Souvenir Album* (London: Royal Collection Publications, 2009).

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