

Colonial Literature of the Garhwal Hills and its Reification: The Uttarakhand Hill Travel Writings of Fanny Parkes, Emily Eden, John Lang, Frank Smythe and Eric Shipton

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Abstract: This research paper tries to find out the colonial literature of the Uttarakhand hills and its reification with the interest of as a twice born canon, as it deals with restructuring works of colonial travel accounts which inevitably deals with the colonial and non-colonial binaries. It also tries to find out the hybrid nationality of colonial era.

William Dalrymple and Bill Aitken both are associate with the archival function of naturalizing the English travel literature of the Indian hills. They do it through the reification of their related patriarchic activities, through a defense of respectful involvement to the Indian hills, either which is ideologically or spiritually. Of Dalrymple's reification, which is based on his consideration of modification of ideology in Fanny Parkes's depiction of India, as far as known none existed, or an ideology which is driven by her own limitless spirit. This reification is his own expedition for domiciliation. While Aitken's reification attempts not to devaluate the ascent of the Himalayan hills with modern technology, he by that means reinscribes his own substantiality. On the one hand, William Dalrymple looks back angrily to history and search uncertainly the aftermath of wars, on the other hand, Aitken involves in historical and spiritual harmony with the holy spirits of the Uttarakhand hills. To consider one as more or less archivally suitable does not make necessary gesture. In both cases it acts of *reification*, which far from to question critically. In a way it deals with the work of fiction that forms and defines a new *architexture*, that the Uttarakhand hill literature. Colonial literature also imparts the impression of colonial masculinity.

Key Words: Twice-born Canon, Colonial Masculinity, Architexture of literary texts, and

Hybrid Nationality

If the Indian English literature in teaching and curricula, is considered started after the Indian Independence, it does not involve that it glossed over the English that were before the Indian freedom moment. As it considered the canon of Indian English literature has begun with the works of early prominent writers as Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, Rabindranath Tagore, H.L.V. Derozio, Sarojini Naidu, among several others who composed before, as far as even Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster are also considered the Indian English writers. The Delhi University English syllabus has added Anglo-American writing from 1930, in which they featured the works of Salman Rushdie, whose works have been a part of honour in Indian English literature. In this way, we are equipped enough to naturalize authors into a kind of hybrid nationalities, while teaching their piece of works. In spite of such various

genres we have, still there has been a continual academic blindness for Indian English travel literature, which has written long before independence. Of this literary genre, seriously much neither yet categorized under any fashioned literary criticism, nor as well as with regard in the present nation building nor anti-nation criticism, for it much deals with leisurely characteristic and order especially with which travel literature is couriered to its modern readers. For the travel literature of the British colonial India, we should better to teach about this hybrid work of literature by the colonizers and literature of the ancient India, accounted by the foreigners and recent greats. So, this colonization of literary canon, which starts with the marginalization of this literature, which I will call it 'Indian hill literature, particularly the Uttarakhand hill literature.'

Travelogues under Indian English literature cover a vast extent and even with taking its any minor facets is definitely a kind of new work on its own way. Of this literature, a small part of it the Uttarakhand hill travel literature written by those British colonial writers with the colonial mindset such as Fanny Parkes, Emily Eden, John Lang, and in the post-colonial era like Ruskin Bond, Stephen Alter, Ganesh Saili and Bill Aitken. Some of the older writers among them have come to the readers' notice so far not more than the last fifteen years or so. However, the perspective of the architexture is still undergoing a constant *domiciliation*, on the one hand, and colonization on the other hand. There has been no sanction on research with regard to Travel Literature by any patriarch, whatever. Consequently, when William Dalrymple has republished Fanny Parkes's *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque, During Four-and-Twenty Years in the East; with Revelations of Life in The Zenāna* (1850) as *Begums, Thugs & Englishmen: The Journals of Fanny Parkes* (2003), he was independent to quote immensely out of context, the subject author of his own choice, as to justify the non-colonial standpoint of his "patriarchic function" (Derrida, "Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression"10). The emphasis behind this, as Dalrymple makes precipitable, was the "orthodoxy" of Edward Said's *Orientalism*—phenomena. So, in order to use Parkes as his tool of noncompliance he without any reason schedules her into the duplexity of the colonial and the non-colonial. An extract from his Introduction to the book, which also imparts an article in the Guardian, reads:

Parkes is an important writer because she acts as a witness to a forgotten moment of British-Indian hybridity, and shows that colonial travel writing need not be an aggressive act of orientalist appropriation - not "gathering colonial knowledge", as Edward Said and his followers would have us believe, but instead an act of understanding. As Colin Thubron has pointed out, it is ridiculously simplistic to see all attempts at studying, observing and empathising with another culture necessarily "as an act of domination - rather than of respect or even catharsis ... If even the attempt to understand is seen as aggression or appropriation, then all human contact declines into paranoia. (Dalrymple, "Lady of the Raj", 2007)

In the chapter "Ascent to Landowr" of Fanny Parkes' *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque*, she finds the Pahārīs, (the Hill-men) "most exceedingly dirty" (Vol. II, 227) after having just she finished calling them "animals to stare at" (227) analogous to "Tartars" (227). Dalrymple says in his *Begums, Thugs & Englishmen: The Journals of Fanny Parkes* that she found "Indian men 'remarkably handsome'" (2003, x). It is not "men", a general public that Parkes talks about but native servants. The exact quotation of passage that Dalrymple paraphrases from is:

Some of the natives are remarkably handsome, but appear far from being strong men. It is impossible to do with a few servants, you must have many; their customs and prejudices are inviolable...They are great plagues; much more troublesome than English servants. (Vol. I, 26)

By the way, “remarkably handsome is not a usual and average insightful expression in Victorian English as Dalrymple tries to observe it. This is the point the only other human subjects she finds “remarkably handsome” in her entire account are the hybrid children of Mr. Gardner and Mulka, and a certain married couple called Unjun Sheko. Apart from this appellation this phrase is analogous to bulls, cows, camel’s clothing, and Arab pony, and so on.

Parkes has expressed in her *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque*, (vol. I) about the climate of India “hot winds” with “oppressive”. “I can” she expresses, “compare it to nothing but hot blast you would receive in your face were you suddenly to open the door of an oven” (25). Dalrymple, also points out for Parkes “The evenings are cool and refreshing. . . . The foliage of the trees, so luxuriously beautiful and so novel. . . .” (2003, x). This is her latter expression immediately after the above. In the preceding paragraph the appreciation of the above climate, she expresses the weather “very uncertain” (25).

Finally, in an open counterfeiter, Dalrymple quotes Parkes, as with the clear intention of sanitizing her persona. This is what according to him that Parkes has written– “Oh the pleasure . . . of vagabondising (sic) in India” (“Lady of the Raj”, 2007). Of what she has written in her *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque*, (vol. II) instead was “Oh! the pleasure of vagabondizing over India! (192, italics mine). Strategically Dalrymple shift from “over” to “in” who reflects Parkes as a “patriarchic function” of the class that is not “over” but within the object of rule. In her expression of *vagabondizing* Parkes can be observe “cantering away” on her Arab pony, a spectacle which talks more of her individual colonial masculinity and sexual prowess than her unquestionable general adoration for India and its peoples. Of the passages that Dalrymple quotes from her *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque*, contradict his reflection of Parkes. The present state of his given revisionist and non-existed references from Parkes are clear that how little of his work has been scrutinized by the editorial board of both Guardian and Penguin.

On the one hand, in *Archive Fever* Jacques Derrida analyses the economy of Sigmund Freud’s rhetoric of self-archiving under the phenomena of self-criticism, on the other hand, the psychoanalyst is trying hard to find a “mutation” or a sharp division within his own institution. Freud is here, compared by Dalrymple in his work of re-texturing of existing *architexture*. Dalrymple’s *architexture* severely attacked by the Saidian school for which it is necessary for archon. So, to outstand the cleavages, of his re-texturing, which come in the forms of Emily Eden and Fanny Eden, sisters of India Governor-General, Lord Auckland. He points out Emily Eden “waspish and conceited” which is thoroughly justified, and absolutely dangerous when compared to Parkes who as even Dalrymple accepted was “eccentric”. In fact, Parkes was as eccentric as variance or inconsistent, equally as independent as fearless to express her sudden change of mind. There is no justification of Eden’s self-authoritarian and highhandedness as there is nothing of Parkes’ sudden change of mind or her capriciousness. This is to say, representing Parkes as the icon of Indian English hybridity is theoretically

flawed because of her individual hybrid peculiarity. Dalrymple imparts categorically Eden's literary popularity, as contrary to Parkes' whose book *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque*, never had another edition. Eden's *Up the Country: Letters written to her sister from the Upper Provinces of India* (1867) is, therefore equivalent with coloniality, which must be abjured, simultaneously re-avowed with regard to claiming guardianship over that which is the secret and interiority. According to Derrida, the process of washing out the memory of the arkhe or the arch texturer, he has used itself as his shelter.

The transformation of Freud's house into a museum, as Derrida explains it in his *Archive Fever*, though it suggests from the private to the public, but does not in the sense from "the secret to the non-secret" (10). The concerning interpretation of the *architexture* is left to the "archontic" validation of an agreement of settlement, or domiciliation—fundamentally a "house arrest", as Derrida points it out— and under this atmosphere the archon archives. Derrida continuously expects patriarchy over the "secret", notes his exergue before the concern interpretation of the architexture. We can say it in other words that he cites the starting point and lawfully arranges the starting point and its course. With regards to this Dalrymple takes into account Lang, the Australian Indian English writer of the 1850s' who is well known for his disregard to the British government. He in his one of the chapters "Himalayan Club" from his book *Wandering in India: and other Sketches of Life in Hindostan*, (1859), writes openly from his exile in Mussoorie about the English snobbery. From his exile he imparts us English manners, stingy pensioners, and trivial titbits and scandals. Of the hill literature, most of the present-day Lang's inventory of English culture of Mussoorie have become a nostalgic source for the modern writers. Incidentally, Lang and Dalrymple have written on around Delhi, both are of descent and went to the Trinity College in Cambridge. No need to say that both are associated with the signatories of archontic domiciliation.

Bill Aitken a Scottish descent (now an Indian), with his "An Introduction to the Literature on Nanda Devi" archives a new canon of architexts. Unlike Dalrymple, he does not attempt to put forward the canon or establish canonical differences— within the frame of colonial and non-colonial binaries. He seeks between his predecessors on the ground of religio-spiritual instead of ideological base. Of the numbers of authors with regard to the patron-Goddess, three stand out permanently, as Bill treats the Nanda Devi on the basis of his religio-spiritual. They are examined on their scale of reverence for the heathen deity. Historically as well as Aitken's examination, Frank Smythe puts between Eric Shipton and H.W. Tilman. Aitken selects, however, describes first about Smythe, and leaves: "for the last, the best and most literary offerings to the goddess", which is Shipton's *Nanda Devi* (1936). Aitken succeeds in his archival essay to polarise Smythe and Tilman as are spiritual antagonists, with Smythe "as the believer and Tilman as the workmanlike non-believer, and both being finally surpassed by Shipton's offerings" (Aitken, 2006).

Aitken refers Smythe's book *Valley of Flowers*, which is as great work and strategic as well. Here Aitken does not select for example, Smythe's *The Spirit of the Hills* or *Kamet Conquered*, in either of which Smythe deals with mountaineering, struggling with the invincibility of the precipices of the mountains, impracticable weather that scares away unsubdued Darjeeling Sheraps, of the much indomitable vigour that is the object of ascent. Somehow is Smythe even slightly irreverent of the Himalayas, or acts being frustrated, and as

John Roskelley, warns in *Kamet Conquered*– “The Himalaya must be approached humbly...Other mountains forgive mistakes, but not the Himalaya” (8).

Although, he witnesses the atmosphere of unrivalled peace of nature and the sovereignty of cosmos that he accounts in his travelogue *The Valley of Flowers* which could not be as joyful as during treacherous ascent:

There is a power of which we know little in the west but which is a basic of abstract thought in the east. It is allowing the mind to receive rather than to seek impressions, and it is gained by expurgating extraneous thought. It is then that the Eternal speaks; that the mutations of the universe are apparent: the very atmosphere is filled with life and song; the hills are resolved from mere masses of snow, ice and rock into something living. When this happens the human mind escapes from the bondage of its own feeble imaginings and becomes as one with its Creator. (64)

Smythe is drawn by spiritually to the majestic and pristine hills that had seen neither the commercialism nor Europeans that strongly infatuated the Swiss Hills, neither roadways nor commercialism, but intact content in– “the kindly peasant folk (that) graze their flocks in the summer months” (17).

The height of Nanda Devi is over 25000 feet, of which just half 12500 feet is located the Valley of Flowers. The former is where Aitken puts Shipton, while Tilman is remains as– “almost a caricature of the emotionally repressed Englishman whose appearance on top of Nanda Devi has a Chaplinesque dimension. [He] crave[s] her indulgence in breaching protocol by not removing [his] boots on her sacred summit” (Aitken, 2006).

For Shipton however, the peak remains, for whom it is the “Inviolable Sanctuary of the ‘Blessed Goddess’. The mountain peak and the mountaineer ‘seem made for each other’” (2006). Each shares the other’s cosmological prowess. While Tilman’s Ascent to Nanda Devi is altogether with rashness and Judaic mindset, “he leapt at the opportunity” (2006), when Shipton refused to go further. Instead Shipton’s honour lies in her sanctuary, at the base of the Nanda Devi. What divides Smythe and Shipton is that Smythe is described singing the praise at the goddess’ feet like a patient gardener– “You may hasten the growth of a constitution but you cannot hasten the growth of an Alpine plant” (Saili, *Glorious Garhwal*, 143). While Shipton remains respectfully with the goddess near her bosom. In *The Valley Flowers* Smythe can be seen as a self-taught gardener– “But I discovered one thing; that there is a freemasonry among gardeners which places gardening on a pinnacle above jealousy and suspicion” (143). Shipton, on the other hand, is fully contented with the brink of great height and glory, whereat he renounces to cross the sanctuary of Nanda Devi, and set it apart as sanctified. All three mountaineers are domiciliated by Aitken to their respective places, in which Tilman domiciled as a delegitimate, Smythe as a legitimated, and Shipton Sanctified. In this patriarchic function, Aitken himself assumes of archiving this hierarchy of archons.

In the concluding lines of this research paper, it sums up that the Indian hill literature, particularly the Uttarakhand hill literature is a marginalized canon, which is yet to be canonized, particularly by the Indian academic institutions. Its study is very essential to our English, wherefore it requires a systematic, rather than a reification of concerning interpretation. In the bygone decades there has been an increasing amount of attention was paid in the Indian hill literature.

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