

DOONSTRUCK DIARIES OF VICTORIAN MEMSAHIBS: BETWEEN THE JOURNAL AND *JHAMPAUN* IN MUSSOORIE AND LANDOUR

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Established as colonial hill stations in Indian's Doon Valley, in the 1820s, Mussoorie and Landour emerged in Victorian literary imagination with the journals of Emily Eden, Fanny Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlop sisters. This paper argues that the Doon's female imperial *architextures* invented new prospects of grafting Anglo-Saxon aesthetics on the Himalayan *terra nullius*, diminishing, miniaturizing, and depopulating aspects of the hazardous, the alien, and the local. A thread of archetypes —*jhampauns* (Himalayan loco-armchairs) and Himalayan vistas— link the aesthetic arcs in the journals of Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops. Although the *architexture* was ostensibly apolitical, it imbued the Doon's representational spaces with a reproducible English character, rendering its *terra incognita* into *terra familiaris* in imperial psyche, while carving a distinct imperial subjectivity for Memsahibs.

KEY WORDS: *jhampaun*, Emily Eden, Fanny Parks, Wallace-Dunlop sisters, Mussoorie, Himalayas, archetype.

Diaris de Doon de las Memsahibs victorianas: entre el dietario y el *jhampaun* en Mussoorie y Landour

Establecidas como puestos de montaña coloniales en el valle de Doon de la India, las ciudades de Mussoorie y Landour poblaron el imaginario literario victoriano, en la década de 1820, a través de los diarios de Emily Eden, Fanny Parks y las hermanas Wallace-Dunlop. Este artículo defiende que las *arqui-texturas* imperiales femeninas en el Doon inventaron nuevas posibilidades para la inserción de la estética anglosajona en la *terra nullius* del Himalaya, reduciendo, miniaturizando y desechando aspectos de lo azaroso, lo alieno y lo local. Una serie de arquetipos —los *jhampauns* (palanquines del Himalaya) y las panorámicas de las montañas— unen la estética de los diarios de Eden, Parks y las hermanas Wallace-Dunlop. Si bien la *arqui-textura* era aparentemente apolítica, esta infundió y reprodujo un carácter inglés en los espacios de representación del Doon, convirtiendo así una *terra incognita* en la *terra familiaris* de la mentalidad imperial, mientras que, al mismo tiempo, forjaba una subjetividad imperial exclusiva para las Memsahibs.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *jhampaun*, Emily Eden, Fanny Parks, hermanas Wallace-Dunlop, Mussoorie, Himalaya, arquetipo.

When a lady is going out here [...] she sends for her jhampaun and six, the Tyndal taking the place of coachman. It is the fashion to dress your Jhampaunees in a kind of livery, which consists of cap, tunic, belt, and trousers of black and red, grey and blue, or any other colour dictated by taste; black bound with red [...] I have seen orange bound with black, and other vagaries gorgeous to behold.

—WALLACE-DUNLOP & WALLACE-DUNLOP, *The Timely Retreat; Or, a Year in Bengal before the Mutinies* (1858)



Fig. 1: “The *Jhampaun*” (Wallace-Dunlop & Wallace-Dunlop, 1858: 224).

On April 29, 1838, Emily Eden, sister of Governor General Lord Auckland, wrote famously: “like meat, we *keep* better here”, in the Himalayas (129; emphasis in the original). A week later, Fanny Parks (daughter of British army-man Captain William Archer and wife of the East India Company writer, Charles Crawford Parks) praised Mussoorie’s “delicious” coldness: “just as wet, windy, and wretched as in England” (1838: 239). In early 1857, before the outbreak of the “Mutiny”, the sisters Madeline and Rosalind Wallace-Dunlop (daughters of John Andrew Wallace, a member of the Company’s Bombay Council) extolled the “singular effect” of living in Landour. No one could forget the “thrill of delight”, they remarked, “when for the first time, the clouds cleared away, and the lovely valley of the Doon lay stretched [...] in all its ethereal fairy-like beauty” (1858: 236). A decade later, American missionary E. J. Humphrey added that the Doon’s “glittering pinnacles and towers of dazzling white” reminded her of the Revelation: “And carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (1866: 82).

Metaphors of “meat”, “fairy-like” land, “Jerusalem” and the conflation of Himalayan terrain with English climate soon became archetypes of an English Doon. Englishwomen’s influence in Mussoorie was also attested by Sidney Blanchard in *Belgravia*’s first issue (1867), personifying the town gynomorphically, as a woman with “vain rather than proud eyes”, coiffured in “hair of the agreeable carrot colour now in vogue”, wearing a “turban hat” and “balmorals”, “fresh rather than rich in her toilette”, who would take a gentleman’s “arm without its being offered, and stop every two minutes to stare at the shop-windows” (167-168). Mussoorie’s feminization was owed to an imperceptible female hand behind the elaborate English fantasy staged in the Indian hills.

A Victorian *Architexture*

With a resurgence of Edmund Burke’s *Ideas of the Sublime* (1757) in the early nineteenth century, mountain speculations ruled the canvas of Romanticism and its transition into Victorianism. William Hazlitt had idealized the refinement of human feeling and consciousness in the act of “looking at the misty mountain-tops” which created the illusion of “treading the edge of the universe” (1889: 248, 338). Subsequently, visual archetypes of “Victorian Himalayas” in paintings by Frederick William Alexander de Fabeck and Edward Lear (influenced by the Romantic painter J. M. W. Turner) and stills by Samuel Bourne steered the Empire’s aesthetic gaze on Indian mountains (Ray, 2012). In the 1860s, Louis and Auguste Bisson were photographing the Savoy Alps for Napoleon III’s expedition to Chamonix, “Auguste Bisson climbed Mont Blanc and became the first person to photograph from its summit” (Banerjee, 2014: 356), while Bourne was capturing the Taree Pass in the Himalayas. Since the Anglo-Ghoorkha wars (1814-1816), the Doon Valley had been a key center of British imperial interest in the Himalayas. In modern times, the Doon is better known for its famous literary residents like Ruskin Bond, Gulzar, Stephen Alter, Ganesh Saili, and I. Allan Sealy. Like early philosophers of the sublime, Victorian painters and photographers tellingly all are men. But the Doon’s artistic and literary genealogy dates back to a corpus of Englishwomen’s writings beginning in the 1830s. This essay explores a less studied dimension of colonial history, that of literary experiences of imperial women in the early Victorian era that unleashed the Doon’s imperial poetics of space, or “*architexture*”, to use Henri Lefebvre’s term.

Lefebvre equates spatial and architectural dimensions to encoded texts, redefining “architectures as ‘archi-textures’” (1991: 118). Textual representation and reproductions of space can also be architectural interventions “conceived of not as the building of a particular structure, palace or monument, but rather as a project embedded in a spatial context and a texture” (42). Words, thus, “speak of space, and enclose it” (251). The early imperial archetypes of the Doon (as Lefebvre

might argue) stemmed from outside the local space, “extracted from nature yet endowed with properties just as natural as those of sculptures hewn from wood and stone” (251-252). The Doon’s colonization was undergirded by Englishwomen’s writings and their somatosensory *architextures* that vitalized prospects of grafting English picturesqueness on the sublime Himalayan *terra nullius*. Being a stronghold in Englishwomen’s literary imagination was complementary, not antithetical, to colonizing the Doon Valley. Founded in the 1820s by Captain Frederick Young, its two hill stations, Mussoorie and Landour, were cultivated as military cantonments and sanitarium. Following the tours of Eden and Parks, in the late 1830s, and the sojourn of the Wallace-Dunlops, in the late 1850s, an emergent Victorian society in the Himalayan foothills came to be textualized. From the standpoint of an informal cartography, this was instrumental in textually distilling, landscaping, and commodifying reproducible spatial archetypes of Indian mountainsides for circulation in Victorian Britain. The writings of Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops supplemented the hill station’s Swiss Gothic styles of architecture—an overwhelmingly androcentric institution (Spencer and Thomas, 1948; Metcalf, 1984)—while producing a literary space to bolster and aesthetically conceal more coercive forms of imperialism. Their *architextural* downscaling of the Himalayas evinces how literary modes of picturesque landscaping diminished perceived hazards of high altitudes and intractable native tribes, reconfiguring relatively alien Indian spaces in Anglo-Saxon forms. Here *architexture* implies an archetypal pool of memories, experiences and perspectival landscapes which proceed as subjective colonial experiences but end up historicizing a Europeanized Doon for readers back home, having pictorially and verbally evacuated the hazardous, the alien and the local.

The Doon was not accessible by train until the twentieth century. Even today, Mussoorie and Landour are reached after an hourlong road journey from Dehradun. Victorian journeys to the towns, past thirteen miles of Himalayan terrain, were conducted on *jhampauns*, palanquins or mule rides (fig. 3). The want of English society in the hills aggravated the physical and psychological strain. Prior to the architectural morphogenesis brought about by Swiss Gothic forms, journeying and journaling by Englishwomen was an irreducible stage in familiarizing and anglicizing the Doon. Their writings staged an *architexturally* mediated Victorian space, especially for women, encouraging them to undertake the arduous Himalayan journey to establish an English home in the hills. Thus, for Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops, *architexture* also implied distinctly female forms of imperial gaze that suggest new ways to assess how gender alters spatial experience—what Lefebvre calls representational spaces or symbolic or mental spaces—within largely androcentric spatial practices like photography, cartography, town planning and architecture. Here, Marie Louise Pratt’s formulation

on European women’s travel writing is apposite, in that “domestic settings have a much more prominent presence in the women’s travel accounts than in the men’s” (1992: 159). Presumably, Englishwomen (or Memsahibs, as they came to be known in Anglo-Indian culture) “sought first and foremost to collect and possess themselves. Their territorial claim was to private space, a personal, room-sized empire” (159-160).

ROUTE 160.

DEHRA TO MUSSOORIE.

Distance, 12½ Miles.

ROUTES.	Distances of Stages.	
	Miles.	Fur.
Dehra to Rajpooor	6	3
Mussoorie	6	4
	12	7

Leave § Dehra (Route 54), and proceed along a good, gradual ascending carriage road, to § Rajpooor or Rajpur, 6½; bazaar at the foot of the hills; thence along a very steep road, for 3 miles to *Jitreepanee, 3; then proceed 2½ miles further, and we reach the Junction road to Landour; then along an easy, gradual ascent, to the top of the mountain ridge, and at 3½ miles we reach the town of

§ MUSSOORIE

District, Dehra Doon. Civil Authority, Political Agent at Dehra Doon. 12½ miles; lat. 30° 27', long. 78° 5'. Sanatorium. Elevation, 6,282 feet above the sea. House, 100. Bank established in 1841.

HOTEL.—Johnson’s Club House, a large structure.

POSITION.—This straggling town is erected on rugged, compact limestones, and soft, black grey slate, heights varying from 6,400 to 7,200 feet in altitude, the mean elevation of the 150 houses being about 6,800 feet. Owing to there not being any level area, they are detached, and at a considerable distance from each other, both on the eastern and western sides.

BAZAAR.—It is well supplied with wheat, barley, rice, honey, turmeric, ginger, potatoes, onions, vegetables, meat, milk, butter. European wines, and liquors are abundant, cheap, and of excellent quality.

BOTANICAL GARDENS.—Exclusively conducted by native gardeners, at an annual cost £79.

DISEASES.—Affections of the heart, bronchocele (goitre), to which children are much subjected, but cured by doses of iodine.

EDUCATION INSTITUTION.—Here are two private ladies’ seminaries, and a boys’ school.

BREWERY.—At this excellent establishment good beer, brewed from native barley and English hops, is obtainable.

INVALIDS, suffering from intermittent and remittent fevers, dysentery, liver, pulmonary complaints, consumption, hostile and general debility, derive considerable benefit from a residence at this station.

THE HIMALAYA CLUB.—This excellently well-arranged establishment, which was formed in 1842, contains upwards of 200 members. The accommodation consists of handsome ball, billiard, dining, coffee, and reading rooms, as also ample dormitories and private sitting rooms, for sixteen resident members.

THE CHURCH, called Christ Church, a neat, compact, slated, turreted edifice, was built by voluntary subscriptions, in 1837.

SCENERY.—From this mountainous ridge, which a few years since was entirely covered with immense, huge timber trees, of almost every description indigenous to India, the traveller will obtain one of the most beautiful panoramas conceivable, as before him stands the snow clad summits of the lofty Himalayas, towering to the skies, on the S. lies the rich, verdant, fertile, and varied expanse of the Dehra Doon, the Sewalik range, and in the distance, the vast plain of Hindustan.

CLIMATE.—At the end of midwinter frosts and falls of snow prevail. In March the spring sets in, and then hail and thunder storms predominate until April; from which to June the weather is exceedingly fine and delightful. The monsoon sets in about the middle of June, and continues to Sept., during which the fall of rain is much heavier than in the plains. From September to December, the season is cool, and towards the end of the latter month it becomes frosty.

TEMPERATURE.—The annual average mean and highest temperature at 10 a.m., is 60° to 70°. The Doon breeze, “south wind,” sets in at 10 a.m., and continues until 8 p.m., when high north zephyrs waft along the air.

DAWS to Calcutta, via Lucknow, Bareilly, Hurdwar, Dehra (12½), 1,058 miles.

EXCURSIONS.—The following small triangle stations of the Trigonometrical Survey of the Himalayas are easily accessible, viz.: *Dudhik*, 3 miles W., and 7,254 feet above the level of the sea; and *Mairana*, 4 miles E., and 7,860 feet.

ROUTE 161.

DEHRA TO SEHARUNPOOR (SAHARUN-POOR).

Distance, 41½ Miles.

ROUTES.	Distances of Stages.	
	Miles.	Fur.
Dehra to Shorepooor (Chokee),	7	0
M. hun Chokee	8	0
Kleroe	10	4
Hurowah	8	2
Seharunpooor Fort	8	0
	41	6

Leave § Dehra, 7 (Route 54), from which place provisions must be laid in for 30 miles, and proceed along an excellent gradually ascending road, pass on to the encamping ground in the forest, on the banks of the dry-bedded hill torrent, three-quarters of a mile before reaching the Chokee, where

Fig. 2: Dehra to Mussoorie-Landour route (Bradshaw, 1864: 235-236).

The Doon of Memsahibs indeed transpired as *architextural* allegories of their subjective states, but, contrary to Pratt, they were geared towards taming the wilderness and mountainous spaces rather than building domestic interiors. A thread of discernible archetypes —*jhampaun* rides and Himalayan vistas— ties the aesthetic arcs of Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops. Though their journals may appear ostensibly apolitical, the underlying *architexture* (patterns to order and condition the colonial spatial experience) imbued the Doon with a reproducible English character, indispensable to imperial culture. Before prominent Victorian accounts of the Doon by John Lang (1859), Vicereine Lady Dufferin (1889), and George Bradshaw's (1864) guidebooks (see fig. 2), and much before daguerreotypes and postcards of the valley, these journals steered an integrative function for their authors, rendering incongruent slices of Himalayan colonial culture into profoundly congruent experiences, its *terra incognita* into a *terra familiaris* in imperial psyche, and Memsahibs' selfhood into imperial agency.

Memsahibs and their Milieus

Following Pat Barr's *The Memsahibs* (1976), feminist historiography of British imperialism has quelled the myth of Memsahibs being "frivolous, snobbish and selfish creature[s]" flitting between bridge parties, tennis courts and Kiplingesque gossip mills; in fact, they went insofar as to uncomplainingly endure the pangs of childbirth and separation from their husbands (1-66). "[T]hey, too", besides being "wives of Viceroy, military officers, and civil officials, fulfilled the arduous task of building an empire", labouring "as wives, mothers, missionaries, and governesses in India and Britain's other colonies" (Nair, 2000: 228; emphasis added). Their histories further "our understanding of the ideological work performed by gender in the construction of empire" (Zlotnick, 1996: 51). While other female identities (working-class professions, homemakers, barmaids) were in circulation in the Victorian regime, the Memsahib became the "archetypal 'figure' of British womanhood" in India (Mills, 2005: 37-38). She was projected as a moral, racially superior, yet vulnerable subject, deserving of spatial privileges, racial segregation from Indians, and chivalrous protection, as discursive strategies of imperial gender and racial hierarchies (Sen, 2002: 75; Paxton, 1992). After the Victorian takeover of the Indian administration in 1858 (especially after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869) imperial honour depended on the mobility, conduct and esteem of Memsahibs. They enjoyed special distinctions, dining with Indian men, even in the absence of Indian women, and accessing harems and zenanas that European men could not (Procida, 2002: 178). With the "rise of the Memsahib", the Anglo-Indian home was morphed as an imperial motif, with an increasing schism between British civil lines and cantonments, on the one hand, and the cacophony of Indian bazaars, on the other. Memsahibs were implicitly drafted as a "diasporic

entity” to fabricate “a sense of home, timelessness, and England” (Crane and Mohanram, 2013: 9-10). Victorian romantic plots with Anglo-Indian settings became a stratagem to induct Memsahibs as imperial citizens (Sen, 2002: 74; Crane and Mohanram, 2013: 119). The portability of Empire into India, promulgated by rapid progress in steam locomotion, implied a “reverse-portability” of Indian artefacts into England (Plotz, 2008: 42; Chaudhuri, 1992: 232), such as Indian spices and curry dishes (Zlotnick, 1996), not to mention the evolution of Indian diaspora culture and nationalism in Victorian London (Chatterjee, 2021b).

The colonial utopia of the hill-station home was another threshold in the history of British imperialism. Being a typically Indian phenomenon, hill stations were “theatres for the reproduction of Victorian etiquettes in Himalayan climate, imperial power relations on household scales, raising English children and managing domestic servants” (Chatterjee, 2021a: 4). Since homes in the hills were configured around female imperial identities, Anglo-Indian homemaking was encouraged to feel equal to —what has been called in the context of Victorian homemaking (Cohen, 1998)— feminine essays and artworks, in lieu of a formal profession. After all, the typical hill station was “a genteel fantasyland, a retreat from reality where the homesick colonial could be cosseted by the atmosphere of a European hometown, down to its familiar architecture and its cosy institutions: the club, the library, the village church” (Crossette, 1998: 8). Under the Victorian administration, it was customary for these regimes to be entrusted to Memsahibs for the social and domestic improvement of Anglo-Indian standards (Kanwar, 1984; Blunt, 1999; Pradhan, 2007). Cultivating racial and imperial differences on a domestic scale preordained Memsahibs as guardian matrons of colonialism. However, this line of historicization of Memsahibs’ *roles* in the colony may undermine female subjectivity as one that was predestined to underscore existing imperial praxes.

Another lens to observe behavioural patterns of Memsahibs is the absence of a grand narrative in the Victorian Empire in general (Steinbach, 2012: 60). This logic is unsustainable given that copious diaries and journals of Memsahibs traveling to India contain archetypal representations of intersecting racial, cultural, and class hierarchies, echoed throughout the Victorian years. Masquerading as informal ethnography, Memsahibs’ writings were “profoundly ideological” (Nair, 2000: 229). It is inconceivable how grand imperial experiments provincializing European milieus, architecture, and Anglo-Saxon culture in the Himalayas, could succeed without Memsahibs. The journals of Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops make it equally inconceivable that they were passive reproducers of imperial aesthetics. For Memsahibs, the idea of a second home, away from England, especially on such hazardous terrain, was itself inconceivable. Eden expressed this in no uncertain terms when she remarked that “[t]wenty years ago, no European

had ever been here, and there we were, with the band playing the ‘Puritani’ and ‘Masaniello’, and eating salmon from Scotland, and sardines from the Mediterranean”. Worse still, the colonial society in the hills was notorious for hobnobbing over trifles like “St. Cloup’s potage à la Julienne was per-haps better than his other soups, and that some of the ladies’ sleeves were too tight according to the overland fashions for March [...] all this in the face of those high hills, some of which have remained untrodden since the creation”. What horrified Eden, above all, was “we, 105 Europeans, being surrounded by at least 3,000 mountaineers, who, wrapped up in their hill blankets, looked on at what we call our polite amusements, and bowed to the ground if a European came near them”. She constantly wondered why “they do not cut all our heads off, and say nothing more about it” (1867: 293-294); this being just one in a series of characteristically Edenic despairs.

Understandably, India “denaturalized Eden, stressing and distorting her Englishness” (Plotz, 2000: 170). It led her to another shocking admission: “Europeans are mad people, sent out here because we are dangerous at home and that our black keepers are told never to lose sight of us, and the ingenious creatures never do” (Eden, 1867: 52-53). When Eden’s diaries were reproduced in multiple journals throughout the 1860s and ‘70s, her anti-imperial angst was probably overlooked. In June 1866, a review of her *Letters* in *The Athenaeum* observed that even “in the midst of her picturesque misery and magnificence, Miss Eden is forever thinking of the cool green leaves, the breezy seashores, the darling roadside inns of her native land” (857). It elided her homesickness and constant cringing at the British occupation steeped in Christian charity, besides racism, bigotry, and hypocrisy. Eden faced another peculiar trial in the mountains: the lack of available aesthetic and nomenclatural precedents. Parks, for instance, boldly asserted what took scholars several decades: “In any other country these hills would be called mountains; but, being near the foot of the Himalaya, that in the distance tower above them, they have obtained the title of ‘The Hills’” (1850: 228). It was disagreeable to her “to be suffering from illness on the top of a mountain, far away from all one’s friends —depressed and out of spirits, with nothing to amuse one but the leeches, hanging, like love-locks, from one’s temples” (235). Parks’ Mussoorie residence —Newlands— was ravaged thrice by lightning; an Englishwoman and her ayah, struck dead in one. Even while recovering in the salubrious climate of Jharipani, Parks was traumatized by the reported death of a pony, fallen off a precipice, and that of a valuable horse, by a “horrible crash” (237-238). Nineteen years later, Nora, a companion of the Wallace-Dunlops, would suffer various stages of an unexplained fever contracted on the ascent to Landour. Every instance of accidental death or sickness was a challenge to the fiction of a secure English Himalayan colony. Upon juxtaposing the constant travelling and imperial pageantry with the homesickness of Memsahibs, it becomes apparent that though their *architexture*

moulded the perils of the *hills* as picturesque archetypes for colonial circulation, their psychological repressions distinguished them emotionally and politically from the mainstream British imperial ideology that was to co-opt their writings.

Journaling and *Jhampauning*

Mussoorie's census from February 1881 recorded twice the number of men as that of women, while that of the previous September showed a much more even ratio (960 men to 807 women), evincing that "females actually constituted a majority of the seasonal sojourners" (Kennedy, 1996: 123). Memsahibs constantly shuffled between homes in hills and those in the plains. Victorian values were indeed cradled under the supervision of Memsahibs summering almost exclusively in the hills, while men served "their colonial duties, enduring the heat and proximity of the Indians" (Grewal, 1996: 72). Further, Mussoorie and Landour were known for their licentious atmosphere, "innocent gaiety, some frivolity" (Ricketts, 1912: 684) and "circulation of marriageable women" (Kennedy, 1996: 126). As one colonel subtly remarked about Mussoorie's Charleville Hotel, a bell used to be rung at six in the morning, as "a sorting-out signal for visitors to return to their own rooms" (Blackham, 1931: 87), after a night well spent in the sinful town. In April 1885, an article titled "A Civilian's Wife in India", published in *The Literary World*, openly advertised the liberal climate of Indian hill stations to Englishwomen: "She may never have to stay in the plains during the summer heats, but spend from five to seven months of the year in a hill station [...] if she has young children to look after, or can throw herself into the round of gaiety for which hill stations are famous" (King, 1885: 364). A world of pleasures, from trekking to ballrooms to bazaars to libidinal thrills were implied in "gaiety". Yet, such pleasures were not accessible to Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops. It was not until the 1840s that Mussoorie became a municipality, had its first newspaper, its first prominent hotels like Caledonia, Imperial, and the Oriental, and its schools, churches, and the local library. Mussoorie's urbanization could only accelerate under the Victorian administration, a little before the age of Kipling, sometime in the 1860s. In the absence of a sizeable English society, early Memsahibs had to find modest sources of libidinal play, in meandering between their journals and *jhampauns*.

Spelled variously, the word *jhampaun* was well-established in Anglo-Indian vocabulary by mid-Victorian times. In 1853, one Mrs. Hervey recounted the great variety of *jhampauns* in "Simla, Mussoorie and Darjeeling", being the "fashionable conveyance in those sanitarium; and the men (*Jaunpaunies*) who officiate as the carriers of the *Jaunpaun*, are gaily attired in many different coloured garments, or different kinds of livery *selon les gouts varies du beau monde*" (53). The archetypal *jhampaun* allowed for a libidinal play in female sensoria. Eden, true to her impenetrability, had to be compelled into "*jonpaun*" rides, cringing at how its frames

hung “over the edge” of the precipices. Even on the “beautiful ride up to Landour”, her “courage oozed out” between the narrow paths and the racing bearers (1867: 115-116). Her queasiness was aggravated when her party reached a sharp precipice and she was informed, “This was where poor Major Blundell and his pony fell over, and they were both dashed to atoms” —and then there was a board stuck in a tree, “From this spot a private in the Cameronians fell and was killed” (116). Despair chased Eden as the path chosen by the touring party proved worse than the one that had claimed the lives of Blundell and the private, leaving her to feel “giddy”, all along, unable to keep thoughts of “poor Major Blundell” out of her mind. Her reluctant admission, that “it is impossible to imagine more beautiful scenery” (116), weighed no more than an ironic footnote in her Doon despairs.

Whom did Eden blame for Blundell’s death? Not the snowy Himalayan ranges, which she sardonically called “a clever old range to have kept itself so clean and white for 5,000 years” (116). Nor did she unreservedly blame the Empire. Instead, she repressed her anxieties, depriving herself of the Doon’s libidinal thrills. “Libidinal”, here, implies, as Carl Jung would have, excitations of psychic matter, beyond its mundane sexual implications (2014: 2985). While for Sigmund Freud, “libido” was confined to and by sexual energies, Jung adhered to its Roman connotations, of a passionate and wilful, even hedonistic “desire”, often inimical to rationality (1630). Eden’s Doon diaries suggest the appearance of the “lack of libido, for instance apathetic states” (1263). On looking deeper, we realize that, while the libido is still very much there, “it is not visible and inaccessible”, being buried in the unconscious (1263). Instead, her libidinal instincts were turned inwards, towards self-preservation. The guilt and trauma of the imperial unconscious gnawed at her sensorium, thus, her sensibility, as she likened the *jhampauns* to coffins (1867: 155). It was not apathy but an ineffable dilemma, whether to be a conscientious perceiver of imperial realities or fashion herself as an imperial subject. Blundell and his pony, “dashed to atoms”, resonated with Eden’s state which “was shaken into small atoms by eight hours of the *jonpaun*” (183). Back in the plains, she admitted that “more than three hours of a *jonpaun* knocks me up” (331). Eden’s *jhampaun* woes were a challenge for subsequent Memsahibs to overcome.

By contrast, Parks enjoyed her mountain rides, unabashedly. In March 1838, she came across the retinue of Auckland and Eden encamped at the foothills, which Parks considered a “picturesque spot” (1850: 225). If the sharp turns and precarious cliffs weighed on Eden’s psyche, Parks journaled “the noise of water” and pleasant sounds of mountain streams “turning small mills for grinding”, which she witnessed from her palanquin. Journaling her ascent to Landour, she showed no signs of discomfort or guilt, despite “eight of those funny black Hill fellows” slogging her *jhampaun* up to her Landour cottage. Rather she felt the

“buoyancy of spirit” brought about by the oaks and rhododendrons around and the violets and wildflowers in her majestic lap (225-228). In her *jhampaun* rides, Parks was able to overcome Eden’s inhibitions. Later, the Wallace-Dunlops would follow her example, standardizing the *jhampaun* as an archetype.

Each *jhampaun* is provided with a *Tyndal*, a man whose business it is to keep the men in order, have them ready when you want them, and tell them at what pace to go. He also carries notes like a *Chuprassee*, and in the house trims the lamps and arranges furniture. He is better dressed than the *Jhampaunees*, receives better wages, and thinks himself a very great man. Ladies always require a *Tyndal*, and gentlemen think him an utterly useless servant. (1858: 225)

Imperial relations around the *jhampaun* overlay three factors: that Memsahibs were conscious imperial subjects, aware of their entitlements; that the *Tyndals* who oversaw the *jhampaunees*, though perceived as a surplus by their male English employers, were indispensable to English prestige in the hills; that although gentlemen found a *Tyndal* to be useless, he doubled up as an *ad hoc* caretaker of English homes in the hills. Besides the fact that *Tyndals* and *jhampaunees* facilitated Himalayan conveyancing, the *jhampaun* was also a source of Memsahibs’ self-esteem and assimilation into Indian culture. It was a much-needed impetus for sick Memsahibs to persevere with rituals of *jhampauning* and journaling, forging transitory imperial relations between themselves and Indian labourers. It was an intermediary semi-imperial stage in the interstices of the grand imperial narrative, with Memsahibs relishing the pomp reserved for Indian Maharanis. In the account of the Wallace-Dunlops, an indisposed Nora is treated like a delicate thing by her Indian attendants comprising the “dandy *Chuprassee*, with his long sword, and little red turban jauntily stuck on one side of his head”, the *jhampaun*’s “six picturesque bearers in their red-and-black uniforms”, and the *Tyndal*, walking in “conscious pride of superior rank and attire”. They compete to procure the “most gorgeous flowers for Nora”, converting her *jhampaun* into a “nosegay”. The “gaudiest blossoms” brought by the *Tyndal*, the “elegant bouquets” made by the *Chuprassee* and the decorated pillars of Nora’s *jhampaun* together served “for her edification” (1858: 231). Such an *edification* is complex; at once intercultural, imperial, and libidinal. The way it is visualized is also not far from the Freudian sense of “libidinal”, by way of its phallic symbols —“sometimes a most elaborate bouquet was arranged, a firm, tall stalk forming the centre: around this, various flowers were tied on in rows, till it looked like a multitude of different blossoms growing from the same stem [...] a bunch of bright red berries in the middle” (231). But, more importantly, it naturalizes Nora’s *jhampaun* and

her liveried Indian attendants as an Orientalised theatre to baptize Nora, the young ailing Englishwoman, as an imperial Memsahib.

Driven by six-to-eight mahogany-coloured Indian limbs —as it appeared in Victorian perception— the *jhampaun* was a Victorian curiosity, trekking vehicle and *architextural* motif, rolled into one, in Memsahibs' journals tutoring other Memsahibs on imperial conduct in the hills. Portraits of *jhampaunees* carrying Memsahibs were a well-wrought archetype of Victorian domiciliation in the hills (fig. 1). The *jhampaun* symbolized a transitory wooded milieu of oaks and rhododendrons that domiciled Memsahibs in the act of reading and journaling, or confined them within a temporal frame of journeying towards an English home in the hills. The somatosensory arc of responses to the *jhampaun*, from Eden to Parks to the Wallace-Dunlops signals trends of other aesthetic trajectories ranging between generations of Memsahibs. The Orientalised theatre around the *jhampaun*, whether abjured by Eden or deployed profusely by Parks, became an elaborate imperial Himalayan ritual by the time of Humphrey and the Wallace-Dunlops.

Anglicizing Himalayan Vistas

Still, it is erroneous to see Eden, Parks, and their successors as a cohesive imperial unit. Emily Eden's sister, Fanny Eden, shunned Parks: "We are rather oppressed just now by a lady, Mrs. Parks, who insists upon belonging to the camp". Fanny added that Parks' husband went "mad" in winters, leaving her to enjoy the remains of her "beauty" and to propagate the myth that the "Governor-General's power was but a name". Parks was seen as a moth to male attention, an obtrusive female attaché to distinguished magistrates. No sooner than her previous lover detached himself, she would be seen with "her fresh victim driving her in a tilbury and her tent pitched close to his" (1988: 106). Meanwhile, the Eden sisters were themselves described as "old", "ugly" talkers who disturbed gentleman's "appetites" on board (Fane, 1994: 249-250). It is not unlikely that the aestheticized imperial gaze of the Memsahibs on the Himalayas was, subconsciously, a creative force to overcome the castigating social gaze fixed on them.

Eden described her "Bengalee" servants "starved with cold" in the Doon, on their first view of the mountain "precipices" that her generation had rechristened as hills (1867: 115). They shivered and huddled together, away from their wives left behind, enduring "the cold and their helplessness doubly" (130). The portrait of helpless Indian servants reinforced the unique suitability of the *hills* "to the racial requirements of the British" (Kennedy, 1996: 36). The textual control over Himalayan vistas was underwritten by imperial hierarchies; even sheer bigotry. Natives were often absent in Eden's Doon, although her familiarity with the terrain was due to the *jhampaunees*; those faceless facilitators of Memsahibs' Himalayan locomotion (see fig. 3). While Eden saw "the most horrid-looking" monstrous

fakeers in the Doon (1867: 113), Parks described “*paharis*” (hill tribes) as “animals to stare at: like the pictures I have seen of Tartars —little fellows, with such ugly faces [...] most exceedingly dirty” (1850: 227). Himalayan coldness and whiteness were projected as hallmarks of imperial difference and suitability, defamiliarizing and obliterating racial others from the colonized space. The Orientalised image of the *jhampauness* who naively ingratiate themselves with Nora, or the stationary *fakeers* and *paharis*, crystallize what Edward Said has called the “formidable structure of cultural domination” in how the imperial psyche identifies, redefines and propitiates itself by defining its conceptions of racial and cultural others (1979: 25); how it designates an Orientalised image of the other that is silenced into an acceptance of its colonially determined selfhood or absence thereof.

The provocative richness of their Himalayan experiences, alongside summary depopulation of native Himalayans, truly determines the imperialism of the *architexture*. Aesthetic intrusions in the imperial mental space, such as the native *ghoorkhas* (of five feet, six inches), were seen as “very small creatures” (Eden, 1867: 113). Historically, however, the *ghoorkhas* were considered to be a valiant community that smothered British troops during the fierce Anglo-Ghoorkha wars. In 1822, *The Asiatic Journal* defined *Ghoorkhas* as a “robust, hardy and warlike” tribe, a “subject of uneasiness”, and the “most formidable” Asian adversary to a British army still unacclimated to the “natural strength” of the Himalayas (228). *Ghoorkha* excellence in warfare was acknowledged in several Victorian accounts (Caplan, 1991). Nevertheless, controlling Indian “hills” implied controlling representations of native demographics, “verbally depopulating landscapes of native figures” (Nair, 2000: 226). Pratt sees this as a “textual apartheid that separates landscape from people, accounts of inhabitants from accounts of their habitats” in the European pursuit of improving “empty” landscapes for the sake of its inhabitants (1992: 61). Although Parks acknowledged *ghoorkhas* as the Doon’s aboriginal landlords, her *Wanderings* positions herself as infinitely more capable of reproducing the space, socially, textually, aesthetically, botanically, and *architexturally*. To Eden, the *ghoorkhas* were “little black dolls” (1867: 113); the Himalayas, “sweet pretty little hills” (125). One image belied the other. But Victorians would have found therein the perfect illusion of a dainty English Doon, purged of the unsettling reality that the rulers were disproportionately outnumbered. What is true for Eden applies to Parks: their journals reflect the “self-defeating despair of the colonial voyeur’s relation to the subject people who are only visually knowable, known as picturesque objects but not novelistic subjects” (Plotz, 2000: 186). Parks is remembered as a romantic who “plunged into the rich texture of Indian life [...] on an Arab horse” (French, 2002: 211), and an artiste of the “feminine picturesque” and “female sublime” (Gates, 1998: 172). Yet hers was too a “dilettante-like appetite for knowledge” (Poon, 2008: 80).

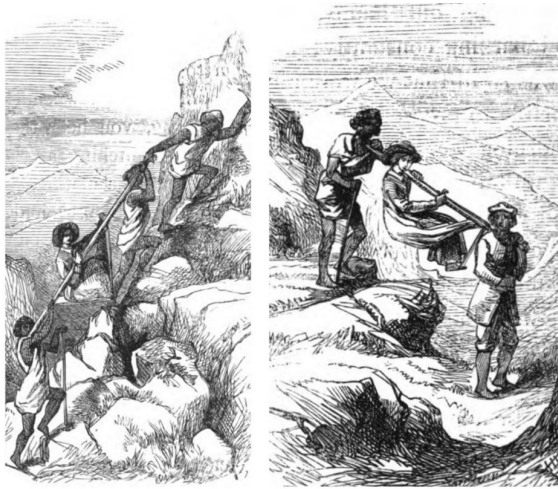


Fig. 3: Himalayan Locomotion: “The *Dandee* [stick]” carried by *Jhampaunees* (Wallace-Dunlop & Wallace-Dunlop, 1858: 270, 293).

birds and the “gay butterflies, enamoured of the wild flowers”, too, were a projection of her libidinal energy; not fictitious but cautiously embellished. A part of her surveyed the Himalayas with the self-sure eyes of a discoverer or a bird of prey, conscious of what may appeal as an archetype in a touristic brochure, even vying with her own metaphor of “[t]he rushing wing of the black eagle—that “winged and cloud-cleaving minister, whose happy flight is highest into heaven”. Another part of her mimed the golden eagle she saw, “poised on his wing of might, or swooping over a precipice, while his keen eye pierces downward, seeking his prey, into the depths of the narrow valley between the mountains” (1850: 273).



Fig. 4: “Landour House” (Wallace-Dunlop & Wallace-Dunlop, 1858: 234).

Her assertion that the Landour’s beauty was second only to the valley of Chamouni, and its “solitary grandeur” overpowered Mont Blanc, was also a valorisation of her imperial eye. Like Moti—or Don Pedro—Parks’ pony of “thick, shaggy mane” and “sure footed” sagacity, the “rushing waters” on the hillsides, the rose-tinted “mountains of eternal snow”, their peaks piercing the “deepest blue” sky, the “white clouds” lingering beneath, the hill

When Parks describes a scene of herself overlooking the Doon from under an ancient oak grown out of a rock —over a land of white and crimson rhododendrons, and hill-men sucking intoxicating juices (231-232)— without any violence, she establishes the imperial/empirical *facts* of native inebriety and of the woods as a virgin territory, in almost the same breath as she informs of Mr. Webb’s “commodious” hotel (230), the slated roofs of Doon, (249) and the “great rate” at which her architectural project, Cloud End, was completed by 500 coolies (240). The juxtaposition of Indian arcadia and backwardness with English urbanity and industriousness marks an elusive rhetoric of righteousness to foster the Doon’s future Europeanization. Despite Parks’ “dubiety” in representing the Himalayas, she was always cautious *not* to “intrude upon the sequence of colonial narrative” (Suleri, 1992: 83). She adopted a form of what Pratt calls “anti-conquest” aesthetics, while underpinning European hegemony; it attested “colonial appropriation, even as it reject[ed] the rhetoric, and probably the practice, of conquest and subjugation” (1992: 53). Parks’ hyperbolic eulogy on a row of English houses on Landour’s southern slope (her Indian substitute for the Isle of Wight) or her ornithological and botanical catalogues, indirectly reinforced imperial registers. If not imperious like Eden, Parks was acutely conscious of her imperialistic eye, which she projected onto the landscape: “The Hills have all the secret treasury of spots, so secluded that you seem to be their first discoverer ... and all so shut out from the intrusion of the human race, that, in spirit you become blended with the scene” (235).

The Wallace-Dunlops too superimposed an imperial “spirit” onto the Doon, while living “about two months in a state of perfect seclusion, refusing all visitors of the male sex” (1858: 239). *Architexture* itself became their libidinal focus: the “thick moss” forming a “splendid bed for ferns”, the oaks and the rhododendrons and the “varied foliage” (234). Their house was “up on a little promontory, seven thousand feet high; a narrow neck of land connected it with the Landour hill”. Here, the sisters spent a picturesque exile, living “at the end of all civilisation”, within nothing beyond them “but the dark, melancholy mountain peaks, as far as the eternal snows” (235) (see fig. 3). They lived “literally up in the clouds”, with the Doon “stretched” before their gaze (236) like facsimiles of Turner’s paintings of Swiss and Italian mountainscapes, hugely popular in England. Taming Himalayan wilderness as postcards or word-images, with European landscaping methods, meant *architexturally* reproducing the hills as “unchanging abode[s] of the English rural aristocracy” (Talukdar, 2010: 4). As if alluding to this very power, the Wallace-Dunlops admitted that “no word-picture, however truthful, no artist’s hand, however skilful, can come to approach their sublime magnificence” (1858: 238).

Memsahibs on horseback, dressed in pea-jackets and mackintoshes, at the Mussoorie Mall “crowded every evening with fashionables” (239-240) was another crucial motif in the town’s anglicization. The profusion of imperial commodities,

plantation estates, bungalows, clubs, and balls and picnics seen in Victorian accounts of the Doon reaffirmed the prowess of European technology in the Himalayas, naturalising robust English traffic on the mall or in cosy picnics. The mall was the meeting ground between English metropolitan tastes and the pristine Mussoorie hills. Few Victorian readers could have resisted the charm of the symbolic collocation of British residents crowding in the mall or gazing upon the Doon Valley from their cottages, while the *jhampaunees* trundled homewards, “chanting their monotonous song” (259). The Wallace-Dunlops’ bidding to Victorians to travel to the hill station was emphatic: “*you must go there to see for yourself*, and feel awed by the mysterious immensity of God’s world” (239; emphasis added). Even invocations of the divine proved strategic. For Humphrey, the Doon opened the eye to “the grandeur and magnificence of nature lifting the thoughts of the Christian beholder directly up to the great Creator. Man had no part in piling those lofty summits and clothing them with beauty; it was the work of God!” (1866: 80). This subtly validated the colonial notion that Indian natives had no role to play in the Himalayan sublime. Much less subtly, the Wallace-Dunlops likened their Mussoorie home to an Anglo-Saxon territory: all “here seemed home-like —fields of grain well-watered and cultivated, and hedgerows like England” (1858: 43). This too was colonization incarnate, of a somatosensory sort if you will, proceeding not as coercive or domineering acts against the native populace, but as systematic correlations of the hillside residence with a hypothetical home in an English hamlet. A synaesthetic passage in lieu of a panorama revalidates English virtues over the Himalayan terrain: “our peaceful English home” overlooking the “Imperial hills, in all their solitary splendour and savage beauty”; the fast-fading “rosy rays” of the sun over “rugged peaks”, reminiscent of insignias of English royalty; “long solemn shadows” nocturnally sweeping the tranquil hillsides, covering “the glorious old pines in their dark embrace”; the sighing of the mournful wind like the ominous knell of Thomas Gray’s Churchyard “Elegy”; “feathery ferns” and “the marvellous tracery of their fragile foliage” (1858: 313) underneath the primitive woods, tracing an almost Wordsworthian passage to India; and a dirge played by the wind in the thickets, lamenting the departure of the colonial entourage, if also India’s colonization.

Conclusion

The journals of Eden, Parks, and the Wallace-Dunlops unleashed a new *architecture* to conflate Anglo-Saxon milieus with Indian hills, precipitating perceptions of the Doon as an organic extension of England. The socialising that the Memsaahibs engaged in was somewhat at odds with the visual apparatus of household management and feminine ideals of homemaking that were still in production in Victorian English periodicals and society at large. For Eden, Parks, and the

Wallace-Dunlops, homes in the hills still had no interiorscape. Their *architexture* was wholly geared toward capturing the Himalayan picturesque, as allegories of their own imperial subjectivity. The *architexture* was, in some ways, the result of a lack of means and access to the apparently superior techniques of painting and photographing technology on imperially coveted Himalayan expeditions. The Wallace-Dunlops, for instance, regretted the absence of daguerreotypes during one of their ostentatious processions in the Doon. Subconsciously, women writers in the Doon themselves deemed their station in the imperial discourse to be somewhat less significant than that of Victorian painters or photographers. Despite competing aesthetics and emerging developments in photography, Memsahibs' accounts of the Doon Valley were significant in their own right.

Whether as illustrations or word-imagery, Memsahibs' desire for the Himalayan picturesque was a reification of imperial identity on distant Indian terrains. In places like the Doon, they reidentified themselves as Britons, therefore as imperial subjects. Their assertions of national identity redefined assertions of selfhood, its difference from the relatively androcentric domains of architecture, landscape painting and photography, as well as from the Doon's racial others. Finally, their Himalayan *architexture* paved for English readers a virtual access to the Doon within in a mode of co-participatory production of a colonial space in a distant corner of Empire, where opportunities of *jhampauning* and journaling imagined a world not only of expeditions and adventures but also social, cultural, and domestic possibilities, without physical and psychological interferences from native races despite their veritable presence. In journals that helped preserve and perpetuate the imperial fiction of a Europeanized Doon, what Eden, Parks and the Wallace-Dunlops achieved was no mean feat of a poetics of space. Not just as homemakers, spouses, mothers, and public sphere companions to their more influential partners in Empire, but also as literary artists—or *architextural* thinkers—, Memsahibs in the Doon were active imperial agents of Britannia's dominions.

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