

TEXTS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY AND INDIA

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Outlaws of Kathiawar, one among early works on Gujarati folk culture and local history, could be said to be a work which despite its reputation in folk studies in India evades an easy literary classification. Charles Augustus Kincaid (1870-1954) almost became a known figure in Indian intellectual world for his score of works, particularly after the publication of *Outlaws of Kathiawar* in 1905.¹ The book records his impressions about the tales of local heroes that he gathered from Gujarati oral tradition of Doha/Chhand and the official records with British Agency Police. As an I.C.S officer and after spending six years in the fascinating yet ill-famed Kathiawar, Kincaid had an insider's access to both British official records and curiosity for narrative accounts popular among the local people.² It is admitted that Kincaid's contribution to the study of Indian folklore and historical tales in the 19th century remains significant both historically and voluminously.

Outlawry in the 19th Century Gujarat

Outlawry in the 19th century Gujarat forms a significant part of the history of this region whose historical accounts come down to us with a dash of poetic flair of oral tradition. While the official accounts of state royalties and British Agency declaimed them as rascals, rebels, mercenaries, dacoits and outlaws, the local people hailed them as divine heroes. Much of its history is caught between the extreme judicial prejudice and indigenous hero-worship.

¹ His other works include *Deccan Nursery Tales*, *Sri Krishna of Dwarka*, *The Indian Heroes*, *Tales from the Indian Epics*, *Tales from Pandharpur*, *The Hindu Gods and How to Recognize Them*, *A History of the Maratha People*, *Ishtur Phakde*, *A Tale of the Tulsi Plant*, *Comprehensive History of the Maratha Empire*, *Forty-four Years a Public Servant*, *Tales of the Indian Cavaliers*, *Tales from India Drama*, *Tales of Old Sind*, *Teachers of India*, and *The Anchorite and Other Stories* among others.

² It was customary that British officers referred to the 'Pariya Notes', etymologically derived from 'puroaj' (ancestral) which were kept by the Barot community. The practice of noting lineage continues till date in the community. However, tracing their local sources is not always possible for the want of adequate referencing and acknowledgement on writers' part.

In this view, to fix the nature of *Outlaws of Kathiawar* is a difficult call to make. Kincaid states his two objectives behind writing it: 1) to understand outlawry in Kathiawar in the light of its coercion forced on the British officials, and 2) how the outlaws enter as cultural figures into songs and legends. However, with the next chapter onwards he seems to abandon his pursuit and speaks of Gujarati novel *Karan Ghelo*, Hellenic influence on Parsis and the legend of Harpal Makwana with an envoi appreciating cultural and geographical richness of the region with ennobling Imperial presence. In fact, the scholars of folk studies do not call *Outlaws of Kathiawar* a work on folktales per se.³ Neither does it become a work of history for a) not chronically dealing with time-line of any region, dynasty or any specific community, b) not substantiating with cross-internal and external evidences, especially when history of races is traced, c) not providing with scientific empirical evidences as they might not have been available to him in those times. In fact, anthropologists and historians often take recourse to linguistic evidences but even at their best such references could best afford a plausible conjectures in hypothetical terms, and d) Kincaid the ICS officer so often goes the writer-self one better by lavishly hailing everything Western which easily turns his writing into propagandism.

The first question is, why would Kincaid deem it fit to write on a region which had a so called chequered and bleak past? He states that once a Colonel named Keating described Kathiawad as the most lawless part of India. Even Captain Bell in his *History of Kathiawad* elaborately states that during the decade of 1800 Kathiawad was “in a chronic disorder and desolation, the result primarily of the annual Maratha expeditions. The villages of Jhalawad were few and those in a miserable state, while their inhabitants lived in a miserable state of fear of aggression....The chiefs themselves were poor, and in most cases it was quite impossible for them to produce their dues when tribute was demanded of them by the Marathas”. (179) Kincaid in the very first chapter avers that many British officers were captured and either held to ransom or murdered. This was further eddied with continuous local confrontations. Although the British established their dominance in Gujarat after the historic takeover of the fort of Surat on 4th March, 1759, it was only quite later that they took active part in the region. The British made their actual inroads into the local politics on account of a few distress calls made by some local royalties seeking their help namely Gaekwad state of Baroda, Jadeja Sataji of Nawanagar, Kathis of Chital, Jetpur, Kundla, and Deewan of Mandvi, Kutch.⁴ Consequently, the British established their

³ In view of Priyakant Parikh, there were many early works in English that dealt with Gujarati folk tradition in some capacity such as James Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs* (1853), A.K. Forbes's *Rasmala* (2 Vols), Anthovan's *Folklore Notes* (1915), and Captain H.W-Bell's *History of Kathiawad* (1916). They have fitfully compiled and edited some folktales, but not systematically. The credit, however, goes to the journal *Indian Antiquary* for making folk literature a regular feature as early as in January, 1872 and onwards. (pp. 47-48)

⁴ L.F.R, Williams, a British civil servant, in his book *The Black Hills* notes that British Agency with the help of Gaekwad state appointed Capt. James MacMurdo as British

Residence in Baroda appointing Colonel Alexander Walker to look into the above matters (particularly for Saurashtra region) which was evidently met with armed resistance from martial communities of Gujarat in its due course. Political developments of such nature made it imperative on the part of the British officers to look closer into the social and cultural constitution of the region. Besides this, historically speaking, Kathiawad had been the most frequented thoroughfare into India of India's early invaders. As per Bell's account, Scythians, Greeks, Rajputs and Mahomedans utilized this western promontory of India as the doorway to the promised land. (Preface, vii) Thus, Kathiawad mattered to the British for its political notoriety, historical significance and cultural peculiarity with its nagging tenacity that dared resist Moghul invasions, Maratha aggressions and British colonial aspirations.

Kincaid takes special interest in the outlawry in Kathiawad, for its causes were chiefly political and economic. Those chiefs who felt wronged at the hands of state courts with British Agency alongside took to outlawry. The outlaws came from chiefly three communities, viz. Girasia outlaws, Waghir rebels and Mianas playing ordinary dacoits. Of the three, Kincaid notes, Girasias had noble bearing. Kincaid likens their exploits to the legend of Robin Hood in England. The fortitude and endurance of Kathis have been noteworthy for which Kincaid traces their migration from Pour (a region around Sindh now in Pakistan) to Saurashtra. *Outlaws of Kathiawar*, thus, delineates three groups for outlawry and from each section focuses on those who had gained both notoriety in the books of British Agency and a laudable place in folksongs of the common people. Those select outlaws were Raning Vala, Bava Vala, Jogidas Khuman, Jumo Gandh, Jodha Manek, and Mulu Manek.

Meghani avers, in response to Kincaid's version, that he portrayed the outlaws in quite superficial and poor manner, which was but only a one-sided perspective in reality. Moreover, British official accounts were entirely silent on the 'code of honour' the outlaws observed in their lives. It was this benchmark of austerity, ethical conduct, respect for women and exceptional exhibition of humanity set by the outlaws that earned them their due respect among the common people.⁵

Meghani suggests that almost all outlaws were unanimous in their sheer dislike for the British. Much before any politically conscious act of armed revolution in India, these Gujarati outlaws put a serious challenge to British Agency in the early 19th century. The chief reason for the deep penetration of British Agency in parts of Saurashtra and Kachchh was the feuding territorial encroachment perpetrated by the bigger states like Gaekwad, Bhavnagar, and Junagadh among others, for they sought out British military aid to conquer and subjugate other neighbouring Kathi and Wagher dominions. Secondly, the East India Company by then was already infamous for its crony capitalist prowess. And

Political Resident at Bhuj in 1819. This was supposed to help the Maharaja against the local mercenaries in the region of Kutch.

⁵ Meghani, P. 8-9.

thirdly, the British succeeded in establishing themselves as the revenue collecting authority without so much benefitting the local people. Such reasons were pivotal in rousing the warring communities of Gujarat to take to armed redress as was deemed fit then.

Myth of Aryan

The study of Sanskrit radically altered in the West the social sciences, history, linguistics and 'Race Sciences'. The European identity politics got a complete overhauling. Max Müller expressed this feeling saying that the discovery of the ancient language of India, Sanskrit, absolutely revolutionized the method of studying world's primitive history.⁶ Max Müller applied the Sanskrit term 'Arya' in philological context denoting name of a family of languages and people who used it. Moreover, Sir William Jones had explained the relationship between Sanskrit and European languages through the Biblical story of Tower of Babel whereof Hindu mythologies and scriptures were classified as corruptions of 'Christian Truth'.⁷ Thomas Trautmann calls this view point 'Mosaic Ethnology'.⁸ Later on, Sir Herbert Hope Risley (1851-1911), an influential colonial bureaucrat at the Royal Anthropological Institute, developed the Nasal Index on the basis of Max Müller's Aryan hypothesis. Risley used this method of anthropometry measuring the size of nose, skull, eyes and colour of skin in his 1901 census of India to determine the population of Aryans and non-Aryans and graded various castes. In addition, by using Nasal Index, Risley also classified Jatis as Hindu and tribes as non-Hindu. This is how the category of 'tribe' becomes officially institutionalized.

In fact, it was Max Müller who had suggested in his letter to Risley to admit of such precarious data as an evidence for 'Race Science'.⁹ This is abject instance exposing subtle connivance between two influential scholars whereby a speculative theory of philology is extrapolated to a so called empirical Race Science for reasons more colonial than academic. One may further read into this sleight of reasoning in Ronald Inden's *Imagining India* as he cautions against Max Müller's tacit approval of conflating language with race. Thus, the idea of Aryans as a race came into being under academic and official auspices of

⁶ Maurice Olender. *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the 19th Century*. (Harvard Uni. Press, 1992) P. 7

⁷ *Breaking India*, p. 38.

⁸ According to Trautmann, European scholars studied Asian and African societies through the Biblical myths of Noah's deluge, the curse on Ham, and the Tower of Babel. He calls it 'Mosaic Ethnology', which became a standard framework for interpreting histories and cultures of various colonized societies.

⁹ Müller writes, "It may be that in time the classification of skulls, hairs, eyes, and skin may be brought into harmony with the classification of language. We may even go so far as to admit, as a postulate, that the two must have run parallel at least in the beginning of all things." (F. Max Müller quoted in Inden, 2000, 60)

the colonizers. The rest is history as to how Germany zealously tried to project itself as the nation of pure Aryans demonstrating its racial superiority to the rest of Europe—particularly in the face of English, French and Spanish colonial exploits—which had so far considered Germany a barbaric land of little culture.

Forging Faultlines

Kincaid gladly rests his entire historical wisdom on this colonial template of ethnology. His interpretations of whatever little information of race and local histories of inhabitants of India that he had to his disposal are based on the beliefs floated through the aberrant interventions by the Western scholars of Indology. This supplies an explanation as to why Kathis, Rajputs, Waghers and Mianas among others in the first chapter are referred to as 'tribes', different from Hindu, whose real identities were put to oblivion by the cunning Brahmins.¹⁰

Kincaid also takes recourse to linguistic evidence. He states that the word Kathi was originally derived from Scythian 'Skuthos'. As for Rajputs, he refers to Colonel Tod's *Rajasthan* Vol. 1 depicting them as of Scythian origin. Now that these claims have been in public domain since the Raj-era, there is still precious little in support of it save few linguistic conjugations and derivations.

Kincaid is especially at pains to prove the distinct origin of Kathis and Rajputs. He says, "Kathis and others had...humbly acknowledged the Aryan racial supremacy and have ever since been striving to be recognized as Hindus." Further he saw Brahmins as culprits, for they used dismissive word for Westerners (Macedonians—Greeks) such as 'Yavana'. In his view, Brahmins concocted genealogies connecting the Rajputs (who were supposedly Scythians) with the Kshatriyas. His dislike for Brahmins comes up again in his chapter on 'Gujarati Novel', when the writer of *KaranGhelo* presents a satirical picture of Muslims, Brahmins and Sadhus.

It is evident from Kincaid's position that he intends to prove the historical and cultural distinction of Kathis and Rajputs from the Hindus whereof the latter cunningly tries to digest the former two. This logic he later extends to Parsis and tries to show how successfully the Parsis preserved themselves against attacking Muslims and persecuting Hindus. In doing so, he predicates his racial history on now proved myth of Aryan invasion. Kincaid endorses the myth of Aryan invasion in following manner:

It is now certain that the original Aryan invaders were at first white men. The affinity of their speech with European tongues is the usually accepted evidence. But there exists a still stronger testimony. They not only styled themselves the Aryas or noble men (the

¹⁰ *Outlaws of Kathiawar*, P. 8. In fact, it was commonplace among the Imperial scholars to refer to any community other than that of European as 'tribe'. For instance, James Burns in his *A Sketch of the History of Cutch* (1839) calls Lohana, one of the prominent business communities of Gujarat 'tribe'. P. 8

Aristoi and Kagathoi), but they were also the men of the Warna or colour, and that that colour was white may be granted from the epithets of black demons with which they liberally supplied the Sudras. (6)

It is characteristically colonial to see how colour based racial discrimination, which has been a Western anathema, is subtly superimposed on to the context and content so entirely different. This is an instance of forging cultural faultline amidst inhabitants sowing the seed of balkanization of land. It is in this backdrop that Kincaid enunciates his account of the outlaws of Kathiawad.

Kincaid further wedges the racial chasm between Kathis and Rajputs. He notes that Kathis often envied the racial superiority attributed to Rajputs for their alleged descent from Kshatriya. It is really an example of Kincaid's eisegetic reading of Kathis' jealousy. Here, he draws his general conclusion from an instance of Charan bards seeing RaningVala in the image of Rama, a heroic Kshatriya revered by Hindus.¹¹ It is a far-fetched inductive reasoning on Kincaid's part generalising Kathis' aversion on the basis of an otherwise laudatory comparison. The other instance he had earlier shown was of Ala Chela, a Kathi who was criticised by a Charan for not behaving as nobly as Rajputs were famed for.¹² This case was more of a jibe, a corrective check on the person, for it was usual for bards to assume the role of a counselling minister through their poetry. And the bards would not miss such opportunities to rouse their patron, for competing peers often prove a useful counter. Kincaid uses these two examples to prove the racial inequality between Kathis and Rajputs perpetrated by Hindus at the hands of Brahmins.

Imaging the Orient

The illustrative mode of *Outlaws of Kathiawar* makes no bones about the fact that it was primarily written for the Western readers. Kincaid does two things with this. First, he maps Gujarati folklore and regional history of Kathiawad on the English tradition of romance narratives and local English history. And second, he morphs racial chasm of Indian inhabitants on Mosaic Ethnology practised in general by the Western linguists,

¹¹ Kincaid's translation of the Doha:

“If a foot and hand had been but filled
With equal cunning, might the same;
Then Raning would have Ravan killed
And robbed Ramchandra of his fame.” (P. 22)

¹² Kincaid's translation:

“Ala, I write these lines for you,
For vain and empty is your pride;
Rajput a Kathi never grew
However hard he may have tried!” (P. 5)

anthropologists and officials whose accounts were supposed to supply with modern Indian history.

While mapping Gujarati folk tradition on English romances, Kincaid draws on apparent analogies for comparison. However, at times such illustrations verge on being facile. For instance, Bhim is called Ajax of the *Mahabharata*; Arjun a more chivalrous Achilles, and Yudhisthir is called Odysseus; Meru the Hindu Olympus. Besides this, famous outlaws Raning Vala and his son Bawa Vala, he compares with Hamilcar and Hannibal. The Motives of Gujarati outlaws were likened, but not always, to that of Earl of Huntingdon, renowned as Robin Hood. In the same breath, the outlaws taking refuge in Gir was so much like Robin Hood making Sherwood forest his abode. In fact, Kincaid calls Gir the Sherwood of Gujarat. Robin Hood was wronged by John's Regency Government and so he turned into a menace for the administration of the kingdom. Although his benevolent sharing of his spoils is a household word, this comparison still does no full justice to the moral integrity upheld by the outlaws of Kathiawad. Here, one may like to go to Meghani's work *Sorathi Baharvatia* which, unlike Kincaid's official version, provides with an insider's view on the chaste and oath-bound lives of Gujarati outlaws. Meghani, through his compilation of folk tales, shows how fondly some outlaws were respected among the people for their spotless piety which they demonstrated in their daily actions.

One may here say that Kincaid in his desire to acquaint his English readers with a different world of Indian culture affords with *ad hoc* comparisons which have only provisional utility to be fulfilled with his immediate English readership. This comparative literary method of 'Placing' close together exists in his work only in the form of one or two liners. Kincaid does not seem particularly interested to pursue his comparisons with greater precision in detail.

What Kincaid does, however, seems to be in fitness with the way early Western scholars attempted to map Indian religion, social customs, life habits, food, arts, sculpture, knowledge systems among others on the frameworks of Greco-Roman civics and Judeo-Christian ethics. All of these Occidental frameworks used for knowing the other—Orient, inhered in two seriously flawed tools of comprehension namely 'dualistic or binary' mode of thinking, and 'universalist or context-free' perception of ethic.¹³ One may hazard to state that most British officials, historians, and writers of Raj era had unexceptionally subscribed to this intellectual grossness. It is a matter for another space and time to see how much of this grossness still finds favour in Indian academia.

As another case in point to verify this argument, one may look into James Forbes's *Oriental Memoirs* (1834). While speaking of the social evils in Hindu culture viz. Sutee and female-born infanticide, Forbes becomes dismissive of entire Hinduism and calls Hindu ritual practices weird. Although there should be no defence for social orthodoxies, a reformative

¹³ On the issue of 'context-free' ethic in the West, see A. K. Ramanujan's "Is There an Indian Way of Thinking?"

concern could have been a welcome call to make. What ensues, however, is condemning and damning the entire culture which is but throwing the baby with the bathing water. Forbes makes some outrageous claims, "It is proved, by late researches into Hindu mythology, that human victims were formerly offered by the Brahmins to the destructive powers; which probably are now everywhere discontinued."¹⁴ Forbes then goes on slandering Hinduism for his sheer inability to understand actual Hindu culture in its own terms. As a result he falls prey to facile comparisons and inferences which exhibit neither evidence nor understanding. *À la Macaulay mode* he writes:

A religion [Hinduism] which admits of such shocking practices, and many other enormities which might be adduced, cannot have proceeded from a pure and holy God. He as revealed himself under a very different character; as a God, glorious in holiness; slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy! When we compare the benevolent precepts of the Gospel with such tenets, the superiority of its doctrines, and the moral dignity of a Christian, must be a glorious pre-eminence. With what sublimity and purity does it clothe the Divine attribute! On what a basis does it erect our faith, elevate our hope, and extend our charity. The Divine rule, of doing unto others as we would they should do unto us outweighs the whole code of Menu, and all the moral precepts of the Koran.¹⁵

Forbes almost with a missionary zeal disallows any foreign value system to consider and he gets trapped in the dualistic value judgement of superior/inferior, sacrosanct/profane, good/evil. It is no surprise to see how the Occidental scholars on the Orient have mostly relegated the subject to the two-value scheme of assessment. It seems as though there has been an inveterate habit among scholars on history, anthropology and culture to commit, either knowingly or unknowingly, to the flawed Occidental frameworks for understanding the rest of the world.

Imperial Outlook

On examining the nature of early writings on India by the colonial masters, it becomes evident to its readers that efforts were made to present the West in general and the English in particular as amicable and ennobling presences in an otherwise stagnant society of India. For the fulfilment of this colonial objective, this order of historical writings let in certain discursal discrepancies. First, the facts of British coercion and chicanery were mostly omitted or their severity was lessened in their official accounts. This helped the British justify their armed operations and build their political exertions into foreign cultures. Second, everything indigenous was denounced for its pathetic wretchedness. If at all there was anything good, heroic or noble, the writer then hastened to prove its foreign origin or Western influence on it. Once the case of exteriority of origin and debasement of the native was argued, it was quoted and reiterated in other historical works until it became popular. This method could come in handy discarding many native

¹⁴ *Oriental Memoirs*, P. 49

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, P. 49

systems of knowledge such as education, philosophy, medicine, architecture, engineering, astronomy among others to be replaced by newer colonial models. All of this would lead to statements indicating how colonial efforts transfigured aboriginal haplessness into something progressive and modern.

One may observe these discursal discrepancies in *Outlaws of Kathiawar*. As regards the omission of facts, Meghani elicits an instance. Kincaid, the historian shows his tacit agreement with the British official bias against the Wagher community dubbing them as the 'tribe' of born thieves. The most famous outlaw from this community noted for his chivalry and code of honour was Jodha Manek, who was but only a looting thug for Kincaid. The reference made to Jodha Manek's successful coup on Kodinar on 8th October, 1860 disinform about and misinterprets it as merely an act of ravaging:

But Jodha Manik was no miser and when the Banias were fleeced to the bone, he spent the loot in feasting the neighbouring Brahmins, whose acknowledgement of his Kshatri descent he wished to obtain, and the low-castes whose support he desired.

But shortly after this exploit, and possibly as a result of his excesses on that occasion, he died of fever in the Gir.¹⁶

Meghani completely rejects this account as it was neither offered with the right context nor with the proper interpretation. Although Kincaid dismissed Waghers as 'rebels' and devoted two pages on the siege of Kodinar, he is silent on the following historical incidents: a) British forces, convinced of some legend of gold plates stashed in the temple, hurling cannon balls on the temple in Shankhdwar Bet; b) in the same strike unleashing inebriated Tommies (British soldiers) on the people to be plundered and killed for more than three hours; c) setting up a decoy to take down Mulu Manek in the name of disarming negotiations; d) Agency force poisoning the natural water-pool by the side of Abhpara hills which was used by the local people and the outlaws. These are only few incidents to name amongst many whose mention Kincaid or others British officers did not deign fit in their works.¹⁷

For denouncing the aboriginal and imposing the Western influence, there are two interesting cases in view.

Of many of his condescending approvals of local life in Kathiawad, Kincaid is especially fascinated by the Kathiawadi thoroughbred. He is so mesmerized by the stout and elegant built of Kathiawadi horses that he devotes a separate chapter on it. They have been such fine species to behold for a white man which he had until now heard of only in the heroic paeans of Homer. Kincaid takes pains to trace their roots back to Athens. He writes:

¹⁶ *Outlaws of Kathiawar*, P. 38

¹⁷ *Sorathi Baharvatiya*, P. 50-51

...the Hellene always copied from life and a living facsimile of the Parthenon horses exists, then the deduction is almost inevitable that the ancestor of the Kathi thoroughbred served as a model to Phidias.¹⁸

Like a historical tale, Kincaid recounts the Greco-Persian war, Peloponnesian war, Russian war of Napoleon, and Boer war to speculate about cavalry movements of yesteryears. Kincaid would not relent to spare anything exquisite Indian to let go unless its exteriority is imposed on it.

The second instance is about the Parsi community. Kincaid seems to rejoice at the fact that Parsis do not speak chaste Gujarati and that they excel at English sports such as cricket and tennis. He feels that Parsis have, like English men live amidst Indian, preserved themselves as a separate nation in India even after twelve hundred years of their arrival. Although Parsis, Kincaid writes, were attacked by Mahomedans and persecuted by Hindus, they have successfully resisted assimilations.¹⁹ Besides, they make similar linguistic errors in speaking Asian tongues as Europeans do. Kincaid's bias is blatantly visible when he writes:

Further, is not one of the most notable characteristics of the Indian his inability to understand mechanics, and the fatal facility with which he jams any complicated machinery placed in his hands? Yet the Parsi is a born engineer.²⁰

For Parsis taking to Western progressive lifestyle and language, Kincaid gives credit to the alleged Hellenic influence on the ancient Persians. Here, so much of biased speculation is passed for so called social study. All he speculatively forwards is that Parsis in India are linguistically, socially and intellectually so distinctive that they are still as much foreigner to their land of dwelling as any English man in India.

Kincaid might or might not have been aware as a scholar of anthropology or history but probably as an Imperial ICS officer, he would have known that much of information on India floated in the official circuit was but a British version of reportage without so much admitting of native Indians' perspective. The nature of historical evidences offered by these early historians on India has been that of tale-telling. Whatever unbecoming consequences of such misinformed historical accounts were to be borne and braved were, however, never going to afflict the reporting coterie. Unfortunately, colonial attempts at disfiguring Indian history, knowledge systems and social equilibrium still prevail in so called postcolonial Indian administration and academia. The proof is still continued use of colonial conceptual/clerical categories in Indian government offices and classrooms

¹⁸ *Outlaws of Kathiawar*, P. 56

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 116

²⁰ *Ibid*, 128

viz. 'tribe', 'vernacular', 'scheduled caste', 'ethnic minority', 'Arya', 'Dravid', 'pagan', 'polytheism', 'pantheism' among others.

It is evident that Kincaid shared an unproven belief with many of his compatriots or oriental scholars that sees India as the land of settlers which has no ethnic, cultural, social and religious integrity. Indian ethos is seen as unreality. This misbegotten belief resurfaces in the 20th century in posits of another woolly theory of Neo-Hinduism propagated by Paul Hacker and his followers. Scholars like James Tod, C.A. Kincaid, James Forbes, Captain Bell, James Burns, and Williams L.F.R, Sir H. M. Elliot and Professor J. Dowson while dealing with the accounts of different Indian communities use a methodology which is hierarchical, divisive, dismissive, and condescendingly speculative. They have warped history with cherry-picking of facts; speculating inferences on unempirical proofs; biased interpretations; referring to one another in their writing repeatedly until the inadmissible becomes popular, forging racial faultlines on the lines of Mosaic ethnology; and at times non-acknowledgement of native sources in case of direct borrowing. They used all or any of these tactics as suited their station and beliefs in the larger service of the justification of colonial processes of hegemony.

On a close examination, one perceives that generic contracts and discursal modalities of these early accounts on India by colonial visitors remain undecidable between writing history and historical tale-telling. This notwithstanding, these early versions of imagining history secure their own space in the all-inclusive world of literary writings. *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Outlaws of Kathiawar, Oriental Memoirs, History of Kathiawad, A Sketch of the History of Cutch, The Black Hills, The History of India as told by its own Historians* among others are some works which emerge as 'historipoeia', literally 'making-up-history'. The generic category of 'historipoeia' does not so far exist in literary taxonomy of the world. However, every time a local history is mapped on foreign frameworks and misreported in colonial conceptual terms, an instance of historipoeia comes into existence. These textual histories leave for readers plenty of evidential ruptures, interpretive anomalies and speculative patch work sufficient enough to reverse a critical gaze on it.

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