

HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF IMPERIAL FOREST SCHOOL (1878-1906)

SUMMARY of DISSERTATION

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Summary

The dire need to study the Human Environment relationship arises intensively in the current age of extreme Climate Change and Environmental Deterioration. The management and understanding of Nature holds a significant meaning in the Global context. The Area of Environmental History decodes the complexes and various contours in the wide spectrum of Man- Nature relationship. Indian Environmental History is an offshoot of 1980's era, which was a hotbed to the rising social and economic movements. The domain meticulously raised new questions relating to natural resource use, especially while highlighting the state policy framework. In this context environmental history in India opened the gates to new unexplored narratives on ecological management. With the passage of time the environmental history has scrupulously generated very important accounts on the ecological theme. After three decades of rigorous scholarship the domain still showcases a large number of gaps in the historical understanding. The scope of environmental history is ever expanding, essentially due to the evolutionary nature of human characteristics and constant environmental evolution. In this light the existing gaps in environmental history are identified and explored. The realm of Institutional History has roughly been highlighted from an ecological perspective. The study aims to generate a historical account on the Imperial Forest School which was a historical masterstroke in dissemination of Scientific Forestry in the Indian Subcontinent. The Study is an endeavor to reexamine the Colonial Motivations from the standpoint of the Forestry Institution. The study explores the Evolutionary character of Nineteenth century Scientific Forestry and generates a Historical record of the Indian Subcontinent's First Ranger School. The historical trajectory of the Imperial Forest School is an important

narrative which contributes massively in Understanding History of Modern Forestry Education and Domain of Institutional History in Scientific Forestry.

The Introduction of Scientific Forestry in itself was a very interesting aspect of Colonial Regime. Scientific Forestry, both as a professional methodology and as an academic domain carried a lot of significance to the Empire. In this context the study attempts to create a historical account of Modern Forestry Education through the chronological journey of Imperial Forest School. As a modern discipline, Forestry infused Continental working techniques into the veins of Indian Forestry, which in retrospect does have a compartmentalized impact. The investigation of the trajectory of scientific forestry as an academic discipline can help us re-understand the Colonial Motivations. We can comprehend the stature of Forestry as an Imperial souvenir in the Colonial Context and view the position of the Imperial Forest School in solidifying the Empire.

Context of the Study

The Modern Environmental History of India was introduced by Ramchandra Guha, whose work on the *Chipkoo Andolan* magnificently generated a narrative on scientific forestry and its consequences on the Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh. Guha brilliantly tapped various resources and produced an ecological historical account of the region. In his study he discussed the damaging consequences of British Forestry and its continuance in the Post colonial period along with its impact in the form of an Ecological Movement. Similarly another crucial perspective from a new angle by Richard Grove dropped a fresh narrative on the presence of Ecological Sensibilities in British Actions. Both the studies were monumental in the making of Environmental History of India. The two opposing narratives gifted the discipline with differing but

enticing frameworks. The Guha model showcased the Marxian- Nationalistic model of ecological prudence, while Grove introduced the Imperial Model of Environmental History. After the advent of these two frameworks the historians rapidly registered themselves in the prevailing models.

With the passage of time a new post- foucauldian interpretation poured in to fill the gaps in the historical understanding of environmental history. The new interpretation of environmental history reached the deep untouched corners in the field. These studies uncovered the heterogeneous nature of Colonial ecological policy and captured the diversified nature of human ecological response. Writing on the lines of revisionist view of history, the study aims to place the narrative in the objective historical process.

The study firstly is a part of larger debate on Environmental History of Modern India, It Showcases the preliminary stages of Forestry as an academic discipline and generates an Institutional Historical Account to fill the gap in the Historical Understanding. Additionally the study also discusses the evolution of bureaucratic setup in the Colonial Forest department. Most importantly the Institute's trajectory is highlighted to generate a lucid picture in its contemporary time, space and context. The study has aimed to capture the objective picture of the domain through the deep analysis of the Institution.

Environmental History has a plethora of analysis on various dimensions of scientific forestry, including forest policies and ecological resistance. This study aims to throw light on an uncovered domain of institutional history in the field of scientific forestry. This study will discover the history of forestry school and generate a fresh account of its workings. The study would firstly provide a historical narrative of the institution

and then move on to fill the gaps of environmental history using the history of the institute as a case study. The study would prove to be fruitful for understanding history of forestry education with new dimensions and in understanding the contours of Imperial motives.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The study sheds light on the historical journey of the Imperial Forest School, which was started in 1878 to train the Ranger Class for the Executive staff of the Forest Department. The school was inaugurated in 1878 which later evolved into a College in 1906. The period of the Study stretches from 1878 to 1906 and generates an evolutionary picture of the Institution. The account further introduces the making of professionally trained Executive Class in India. The research additionally illustrates the Institute's history to revise the Meta narratives drawn out of the past. Using the School's position in the historical past we can suggest that, in a nutshell it views history as the process.

The study places the Institution in the Indian context to facilitate historical understanding. It explores the importance of the institution in the Scientific Forest Management. Fundamentally the study is placed in the environmental debate to furnish accuracy in the understanding of the past. The study does not claim to challenge any theory or framework but rather it views the history of Scientific Forestry from the School's perspective. The temporal boundations of the study, limits us from drawing any major theoretical claims. The Study concludes with a proposed speculation about the working of the institution in the twentieth century, thus leaving it in the capable hands of the future historians to uncover its nature in war timelines.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

The research study primarily postulates the following Objectives –

1. To explore the contextual growth of Scientific Forestry and its impact in the Indian Subcontinent in the Nineteenth Century.
2. To generate a historically accurate account on the establishment and evolution of Forestry Education in Colonial India.
3. To prudently engender an important narrative on Institutional History in Indian History.
4. To document the narrative of the establishment and growth of the Imperial Forest School in India.
5. To analyze the evolutionary character of the school and its profound impact in the growth of Forestry Education in India.
6. To highlight the connection of institutions with the globalized currents in the contemporary context.
7. To capture the trajectory of creation of professionally trained Executive Class of the Forest Department in the Colonial Era.
8. To narrate the stature of Forest School in the Larger Framework of Environmental History.
9. To further highlight the historical gaps in domains of Institutional History and Environmental History.

HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY

The study primarily proposes to write an Institutional History of Imperial Forest School in relation to the Environmental History framework.

1. The paucity of Institutional History leaves a historical gap in the understanding of history. The study hypothesizes the presence of a profound association of Forest School with the working of the Forest Department.
2. The study postulates the Institution as the disseminator of Scientific Forestry in India vitally in relation to global intellectual current of its time. The contribution of schools in the creation of a network of scientific forestry education is extensively proposed.
3. The inception of the Institution is profound in relation to the formation of the Executive Class of Forest Bureaucracy in the Indian subcontinent.
4. The study hypothesizes the profound role of the Institution in stabilizing the Forest Department and its impact on the future endeavors of the Department.
5. The investigation of the Historical trajectory of the Institution speculates the presence of Colonial Flexibility in the workings of the school.
6. The deeper analysis of the Institution facilitates the closer examination of Scientific Forestry, thus providing a fresh perspective in the environmental narrative in History writing.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The meaning of research entails the investigator to precisely utilize a scientifically accurate research methodology. The respective study has utilized analytical,

descriptive and case study methods to document the History of Imperial Forest School. The wide range of methods adopted in the making of the study provides a deep analysis on the historical development of the Institution. The aims and objectives of the study provide a clear roadmap to the study's purpose, which implies objectivity in research through description of accurate historical character of the institution in the respective time. The Descriptive method in the study highlights the causation factors associated with the making of Institution and also illustrate the Evolutionary trajectory of the Institute. The Analytical method in the historical enquiry fills the gap in the understanding by analyzing the historical event and scrutinizing the Institute's standpoint in its particular time, space and context. Lastly the Case Study method employed in the research is an important methodology tool which places the Institute in the Centralised position to comprehend the History from its unique stance.

The study has aimed to capture Institutional History in the Environmental studies. The idea is to explore the untouched spectrums in the environmental history of India. The Institute forms the Central theme in the analysis of the environmental approach of the Colonial Empire. The relationship of School with the contemporary intellectual trends is analyzed to create a historical narrative. The study has primarily focused on the institutional commencement and evolution, along with the existing patterns in Scientific Forestry in the Subcontinent, which lastly gets situated in the environmental history debate on Modern Indian History.

The Study is composed using a wide range of primary and secondary sources. Large number of published books and articles are consulted in the research process. The primary data is extracted from contemporary Journals and Official Administrative Reports. Primarily the study has been conducted using a historical Conceptual framework to draw an objective account of the Institution. The Institution features

exclusively in Environmental History to provide answers to the popular query on Colonial Motivations.

CHAPTERISATION OF THE STUDY

In order to narrate a scientifically accurate historical account, a proper systematic description is required. A methodical chapterisation in a study makes the account objective and impeccable. A well organized historical account promotes a historian's craft. The study is crafted in a systematic manner to endorse appropriate research methodology.

The First Chapter of this study is the introductory chapter which aims to deeply introduce the title of the study. It deals with important introductory aspects which provide a concise roadmap of this study. The section inaugurates the topic and discusses the research plan and methodology utilized in the study. It provides the context of the study, the objectives, hypothesis, review of literature and chapterisation.

The second chapter titled Brief '*History of Forestry in the Nineteenth Century*' deals with the contextual portion of the topic. The chapter is divided into three sections, the first one discusses the continental forestry developments in Europe the next section explores the infusion of scientific forestry in nineteenth century India, while the last section specifically discusses the development of scientific forestry in the colonial U.P. Hills.

The third chapter is the core chapter of the study, which is titled '*A Historical Account on Imperial Forest School*'. The chapter primarily discusses the vision of the Imperial Government while introducing Forest Education in India. The chapter

explores the detailed trajectory of the institution by investigating the foundation and evolution of the School. It provides eloquent details of the school's evolving working methodology and academic curriculum. The section is a comprehensive account of Imperial forest school's historical journey from its own unique standpoint.

The Fourth Chapter is the concluding chapter of the study which places the School in the Environmental History debate. The chapter firstly explores major environmental history frameworks and highlights their contribution in the generation of historical understanding. The chapter lastly discusses the school's distinctive intellectual standpoint in its particular time, space and context.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The key findings of the study are discussed below:

1. Imperial Forest School (1878- 1906) played a critical role in dissemination of Scientific Forestry and Governance in South Asia. It was vitally crucial Institution which infused the tenets of Scientific Forestry from the European setup to the South Asian region. The institution introduced Scientific Forestry as Practice as well as an Academic Field.
2. The School played an important role in creating Modern Forestry Education Curriculum. It vitally implemented new standards, practices and management techniques in Forestry science. The Forestry as a modern subject was an offshoot of colonial governance which majorly was sown in the Indian Educational Setup through the Imperial Forest School.
3. The school additionally contributed in generating massive force of professionally trained Bureaucratic Section in the Forest Department. The

men trained through the Institution became the propagator of Scientific Practices.

4. The school massively impacted the Forestry Education and evidently became an essential Globalised Model for Future Forestry Institutions. We find that school as a major Forestry Institution was a landmark in the history of Scientific Forestry The school successfully inspired the Imperial Government to re-establish similar Institutions in various parts of South Asia, thus creating a powerful string of Forestry Schools.
5. The Study most importantly highlights that the Institutional History of the Forest School expands the Frontier of Environmental History of India. The Institution's trajectory highlights New Questions in environmental history which had previously not been illuminated adequately.