Peacock, not poppycock!

Hi, Everyone! One of the last ‘layers’ I added was incorporating a couple of my mother’s tips.

My mother had written to me re putting in a romantic description of ‘dusty roads’ and such things. I *really* wanted to oblige her in that.

But where would that description belong?

There was nothing romantic about the Cellular Jail, or the Moplah riots, or Mumbai, which was, anyway, a busy metropolis even then (with ‘dusty’ roads certainly, but not romantic!)

After cogitating over the problem, it hit me—the Sevagram Ashram was perfect for the description. I had not included any description of it, which was very remiss of me.

I rushed to my usual place: Google search engine. Studied the Ashram photos and inserted the description, with many mental thanks to my mother.

My mother also would have liked me to add a peacock to the Savarkar recovery scenes. She thought it would add a nice contrast.

I shrank—just like a wilting mimosa—from doing that. It was a very, very emotional scene for me and a frivolous peacock (in Walchandnagar that too!) didn’t gel with me.

But I didn’t want to let go my mother’s idea either, not this easily. So I went back to gazing at my manuscript hoping to see some light—and I did!

Fortunately for me, I remembered that the British had imported peacocks into Andaman, most definitely on the Ross Island! Savarkar himself has written in his *My Transportation for Life* how he watched the hens and the cows from block 5 after being discharged from the hospital.

Why should I not add a peacock to the scene?

The more I thought of it, the more I liked it. When I visited the Cellular Jail (more on that in later posts), I grabbed the opportunity to study if in fact it was possible for Savarkar to see a peacock from the Cellular Jail.

Ross Island, while close to Port Blair, is not near enough—at first glance—for peacocks to be visible from it. An elephant, yes, but peacock, no way! I was dashed, but only momentarily. I tripped along to the roof—very nervously crossing some flimsy looking wooden boards (*would they bear my weight?* I agonized)—and gazed at Ross Island long and hard.

I imagined the block 5 (it is not extant), imagined Savarkar's cell with the ocean view—fortunately, I have a *very*good imagination!—and looked from that perspective toward the Ross Island.

And what do you know?!! Ross Island has a peculiar tip that pokes out into the ocean, bringing it very close to exactly to the spot where block 5 must have been!

From there a peacock could be visible. The rest of the island is set at an angle away from Port Blair.

Anyone who wishes to argue this point may visit the Cellular Jail and see the truth of what I write for themself.

I can assure you all that my peacock was standing at the very tip of that tip when Savarkar saw it.

By the way, I have been told by a blogging expert that it is okay to use multiple punctuations in a blog—freedom of expression, that's what counts here, apparently, not rules.

Yippee!

Anurupa