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M.A. ENGLISH (FOURTH SEMESTER)

Travel Writing

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TRAVEL WRITING

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I	Chapters 1,2,3 from Travel Writing by Carl Thompson Introduction Defining the Genre Travel Writing through the Ages: An Overview
II	Roy Moxham : The Great Hedge of India
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TEXT BOOKS
Susan Bassnett, 'Travel Writing and Gender', in Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing, ed. Peter Hulme and Tim Young.
Tim Youngs – The Cambridge introduction to Travel Writing

ELECTIVE V - TRAVEL WRITING

Unit I

Chapters 1,2,3 from Travel Writing by Carl Thompson

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Chapter 2 - Defining the Genre

Chapter 3 - Travel Writing through the Ages:An Overview

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 1 - Introduction

Short Summary

Travel writing is a popular literary genre with numerous bestsellers and reissues. It encompasses a diverse range of authors, from pilgrims to adventurers. The genre's popularity has grown in recent decades, with acclaimed writers like Paul Theroux and Bruce Chatwin. The genre is particularly relevant in the modern era of globalization, where mobility, travel, and cross-cultural contact are common. Travel writing offers insights into the encounters and exchanges between cultures and the lives of people in a globalizing world.

Academic interest in travel writing has grown significantly due to the spread of postcolonial studies in humanities and social sciences. Postcolonial studies aim to understand and contest the consequences of European empires, which laid the foundations of our modern, globalized world. Travel writing has been a valuable resource for understanding the processes that created and perpetuate inequalities between different regions, particularly between the developed and less developed West.

The genre has also been influenced by the rise of second-wave feminism, literary studies, and social sciences. However, the genre's commercial success suggests that it is popular among academic readers, but critics argue that it encourages a conservative political outlook and seeks to escape contemporary realities. Travel writing is often seen as a refuge for complacent, nostalgic values, and a consoling message to the privileged, middle-class Westerners.

The recent academic interest in travel writing is not a straightforward endorsement or celebration of the form. Many researchers seek to decipher and critique travelogues against the grain, examining their larger ideological implications and geopolitical consequences. Travel writing has been criticized for its complicity in crimes and injustices inflicted by European imperialism, racist beliefs, and

promotion of racial and cultural supremacism. However, some academic defenders argue that travel is a medium for human freedom and fostering an internationalist vision. Some scholars also point out that travelogues may vary in their extent of complicity with European imperialism and their consequences were not always baleful and exploitative. The purpose of this volume is not to adjudicate in these arguments over the ethical implications of travel writing but to equip readers with a conceptual framework and critical vocabulary that should be useful for any form of travel text, culture, and period.

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 1 - Introduction

Detailed Summary

Travel writing is a highly popular literary genre, with numerous new travelogues and bestsellers featuring writers like Michael Palin, Bill Bryson, and Paul Theroux. The genre has also resulted in the release of previously old out-of-print travel books in series like Random House's Vintage Departures and Picador's Travel Classics. These books recount journeys made for various purposes, from exploring the exotic to discovering the wider world. Authors range from pilgrims, conquistadors, explorers, backpackers, celebrities, comedians, and serious writers. The genre's popularity has grown in recent decades, with a 'boom' in recent decades.

The genre's reputation rose sharply in the latter part of the century, with the appearance of critically acclaimed writers like Paul Theroux, Bruce Chatwin, Ryszard Kapuscinski, and Robyn Davidson. The prestigious British literary journal Granta played a vital role in establishing travel writing as the popular literary form it has become. Travel writing is particularly reflective of the modern condition, as we live in an era of increasing globalisation, where mobility, travel, and cross-cultural contact are everyday realities. As a result, travel writing has gained new relevance and prestige, providing insights into the encounters and exchanges between cultures and the lives being led in a globalizing world.

Academic interest in travel writing has significantly increased over the past few decades, particularly in the context of postcolonialism and postcolonial studies. Postcolonial studies aim to understand and contest the consequences of European empires of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which laid the foundations for our modern, globalized world. This led to cross-cultural contact, massive relocation of individuals and peoples, and the establishment of inequalities between developed and less developed regions. Travel writing is an invaluable resource for

understanding these inequalities and how cultures regard and depict each other.

From the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries, travel writing played a crucial role in European imperial expansion, providing insights into the activities of European travelers abroad and the attitudes and ideologies that drove European expansionism. Modern travel writing can also yield significant insights into the ideologies and practices that sustain the current world order.

The rise of postcolonial studies has also led to the investigation of women's contribution to travel writing, as well as debates about canonicity and the relationship between aesthetic and functional forms of writing. In social sciences such as Geography, Anthropology, and Sociology, the interest in travel writing has been partly a consequence of theoretical and methodological debates as to the forms of knowledge and enquiry most appropriate to each discipline.

However, the commercial success of travel writing may seem to suggest a straightforward enjoyment among academic readers. Much of the scholarly discussion of travel writing has been undertaken in a spirit of critique rather than celebration. Critics argue that travel writing encourages a conservative political outlook and creates the illusion of an uncontaminated Elsewhere to discover.

In an age when many cultures and societies are less homogeneous and people possess a "hyphenated" identity, travel writing responds by reinstating a firm sense of differences between cultures, regions, and ethnicities and dealing with pernicious stereotypes. This approach often delivers a consoling, self-congratulatory message to the privileged, middle-class Westerners who are its principal readership.

The recent academic interest in travel writing is not a straightforward endorsement or celebration of the form. Many researchers seek to read individual travelogues against the grain to decipher and critique their larger ideological implications and geopolitical consequences. This is the case with both contemporary and historical travel writing, where scholars have generally been concerned to trace the genre's complicity in the crimes and injustices inflicted by European imperialism, its contribution to racist beliefs and ideologies, and its role in promoting racial and cultural supremacism.

However, travel writing also has academic defenders, such as Mark Cocker, who believes that travel is one of the greatest doors to human freedom and that travel books are a medium through which humans celebrate this freedom. Jim Philip suggests that the best recent travel writing works foster an internationalist vision and

implicitly, a cosmopolitan attitude that encourages tolerance, understanding, and a sense of global community. Holland and Huggan soften their criticism of contemporary travel writing with an acknowledgement of the form's 'defamiliarizing capacities'.

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 2 - Defining the Genre Short Summary

Travel is a journey through space, often involving encounters with difference and otherness. It is a negotiation between self and other, involving alterity and identity. Travel writing is a record of this encounter, often describing events or new perspectives acquired during travel. It can be a report on the wider world, an account of an unfamiliar place, or a reflection of the traveler's values, interests, and assumptions. However, not all forms of writing that emerge from the travel experience should be classified as travel writing. Some texts, such as academic treatises, bulletins, and novels, may not be considered travel writing and should be seen separately.

Travel writing is a diverse and complex genre that encompasses various forms such as private diary, essay, short story, prose poem, and table talk. It is often difficult to define its boundaries and exclude other genres like autobiography, ethnography, nature writing, and fiction. The term is surrounded by taxonomic debates and debates on the relationship between fact and fiction, as well as the literary value and intellectual status of travel writing.

Exclusive And Inclusive Definitions Of ‘Travel Writing’

Travel writing is a diverse genre that encompasses various forms of writing and text, including novels, poetry, maps, paintings, sketches, photographs, television programs, and films. Paul Fussell, a renowned critic, defines travel writing as the material classified in many bookshops as "travel literature," often extended prose narratives that resemble novels more than guidebooks.

Travel books, on the other hand, may include illustrative material but are usually secondary to the main prose narrative. The narrative offered by a travel book is often a retrospective, first-person account of the author's own experience of a journey or unfamiliar place or people. This personal or subjective aspect distinguishes travel books from guidebooks, which often focus on practical information.

Modern travel writers often focus on providing entertainment and aesthetic

pleasure to their readers, while others prioritize reporting controversial practices or environmental devastation. Jan Borm distinguishes between 'travel books' and 'travel writing', defining the former as a non-fictional narrative of travel and the latter as a collective term for various texts whose main theme is travel.

Travel writing can be broadly defined as a constellation of various types of writing and/or text, connected by a set of "family resemblances." The boundaries of the travel writing genre are fuzzy, and there is little point in policing them too rigidly.

Travellers' Tales: Fact And Fiction in Travel Writing

Travel writing, particularly the travel book, is a genre with ambiguities and complexities. Writers must negotiate roles as a reporter and storyteller, ensuring the distinction between fiction and non-fiction is not clear-cut.

Travel writing is a textual artifact that is constructed by its writers and publishers. It involves the filtering of the original travel experience, which can introduce fictive dimensions. Travel writers often commit sins of omission and commission, as well as elements of fabrication in the telling of their travel tale. In modern travel books, episodes are written up retrospectively, but there is considerable scope for recreated episodes to take on a fictive coloring.

Travel writers often weave fictional elements into their texts, ranging from faithfully recording experiences to wilfully inventing details and anecdotes. This blurring of the boundary of fact and fiction is part of the attraction of the form, as seen in recent decades with postmodern travel writing. Traveller-narrators often cast themselves in the role of trickster-figures, confounding our conventional categorizations of fiction and non-fiction to explore the competing claims of imagination, reason, and moral responsibility in our engagement with the world.

Non-fiction in travel writing is often viewed as a creative mediation between fact and fiction, offering selective and fictive representations of the world. While travelogues provide information, their apparent truthfulness is a rhetorical effect and should not be viewed naively.

The Cultural And Intellectual Status of Travel Writing

Travel writing is frequently dismissed by critics due to its widespread popularity and its ability to transcend numerous generic boundaries, often moving into territory covered by academic disciplines like natural history, geography, and anthropology. This has led to some writers feeling uncomfortable with being identified with the

genre, as it often falls short of full literary status. Travel writing's relationship with ethnography is replicated in its relationship with most other academic disciplines.
The genre has a resolutely amateur or dilettante aspect, making it perceived as not being at the cutting edge in terms of factual information. However, it is possible to take a more expansive view of the genre, where modern ethnography becomes one mode of travel writing, rather than a separate genre to be sharply distinguished from it. Travel writing has not always been regarded as such a minor, inconsequential form, with significant differences between the genre and the earlier, more eclectic genre known as 'voyages and travels'.

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 2 - Defining the Genre Detailed Summary

Travel is a journey through space, often involving encountering difference and otherness. It is a negotiation between self and other that is brought about by movement in space. This definition of travel is reductive and raises questions about the classification of various forms of travel, such as trips to local shops or quick visits to neighbors.

Travel writing is a record or product of an encounter between self and other, which can be described directly in the writing or implicitly in the writing. Even in sparse, non-narrative mode, travel writing emerges from an encounter between self and other precipitated by movement. It has a two-fold aspect: it is a report on the wider world, an account of an unfamiliar people or place, and it also reveals something about the writer's values, interests, and assumptions.

However, this definition raises many questions. Some readers may not classify a mere list or catalogue of data as travel writing, and others may be hesitant to classify specialized academic treatises in fields like geography and anthropology, bulletins and articles sent back to newspapers and magazines by foreign correspondents, novels based on personal experiences, or Henry James's novels reflecting cultural differences between America and Europe.

It is unclear whether all texts that emerge from the travel experience should be classified as travel writing or if they should be seen as distinct from travel writing. If so, by what criteria should these texts be excluded from the travel writing genre?

Travel writing is a loosely defined and diverse genre that has always maintained a complex relationship with closely related genres. It can encompass various forms

such as private diary, essay, short story, prose poem, rough note, and polished table talk. The genre's formal diversity and thematic range make it difficult to define where it ends and other genres begin. The boundaries of the travel writing genre are fuzzy, as what is considered "really" or "properly" travel writing are subject to debate. The present chapter discusses taxonomic debates surrounding the genre in recent academic discourse and the various ways in which the term "travel writing" has been defined by scholars. It explores two key areas of ambiguity and dispute: the relationship between fact and fiction in travel writing and the question of the literary value and intellectual status of travel writing. By mapping these debates, the chapter aims to convey a sense of the diverse forms and modes that the genre has taken historically.

Exclusive And Inclusive Definitions of 'Travel Writing'

The local bookshop has a floor dedicated to 'Travel', stocked with guidebooks, maps, photography, and literature. However, there is little scholarly consensus on whether these publications are considered 'travel writing'. Some consider it to be just modern travel literature, while others consider it to include various forms of travel-related documents or cultural artifacts.

Paul Fussell, a renowned critic, has emphasized the importance of travel writing in *Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars* (1980). He defines travel writing as the material classified in many bookshops as "travel literature," which is often extended prose narratives that resemble novels more than guidebooks. Travel books, on the other hand, may include illustrative material but are usually secondary to the main prose narrative. The narrative offered by a travel book is often a retrospective, first-person account of the author's own experience of a journey or unfamiliar place or people. This personal or subjective aspect distinguishes travel books from guidebooks, which often focus on practical information. Travel books are non-fictional rather than fictional, and their generic contract with readers is different from that of novels.

The travel book, as defined by Paul Fussell, is a prominent branch of the travel writing genre in modern times. It typically offers readers interesting observations about the peoples or places visited by the author, as well as a narrative pleasure similar to a novel or romance. The travel book typically begins with the narrator setting out from their home, seeking adventures, new experiences, and interesting stories. The genre admits enormous diversity in terms of style, tone, form, structure,

personae, and literary aspiration. It can encompass serious and humorous writing, and span the spectrum of high-brow, middle-brow, and low-brow writing. The genre also includes accounts like Jan Morris's Venice, where the author is highly self-effacing, only revealing personal information occasionally. The travel book is a sub-species of memoir, with many accounts focusing on the narratorial self.

Modern travel writers often focus on providing entertainment and aesthetic pleasure to their readers, while others prioritize reporting controversial practices or environmental devastation. The modern travel book is a flexible genre with diverse material, with variant forms that challenge the definition of the genre. Before 1900, the English-speaking world used a genre called 'voyages and travels', which encompassed a variety of travel-related texts and served various functions. These texts were often impersonal and un-autobiographical, with the focus on information gathered during the journey.

The distinction between travel book and guidebook often breaks down in travel accounts published before 1800, as writers included practical advice within a more personal narrative. The opposition between aesthetic and functional is simplistic and anachronistic, as earlier eras defined this category more expansively. Therefore, it is important to prefix'modern' or 'literary' to Fussell's notion of the travel book.

Fussell's taxonomic categorization of travel writing suggests that it emerged from an era of exploration rather than travel. This utilitarian and functional form is often dismissed as a lack of genuine travel before around 1750. Fussell's definition of 'proper' travel is narrow and exclusive, excluding many types of writing that were considered in earlier eras as 'voyages and travels'. This narrow definition of 'travel' and 'traveller' is seen as too simplistic to adequately account for or describe the genre. Critics argue that the term 'travel writing' can encompass material ranging from guidebooks, itineraries, routes, accounts of journeys over land or water, or descriptions of experiences abroad. This historical perspective also challenges the notion of a sharp distinction between travel writing and ethnography, which were often conducted in forms more akin to the modern travel book than the modern ethnographic study.

Jan Borm distinguishes between 'travel books' and 'travel writing', defining the former as a non-fictional narrative of travel, while the latter is a collective term for various texts whose main theme is travel. Borm's definition allows for the classification of both fictional and non-fictional texts, such as Conrad's Heart of

Darkness and Sterne's Sentimental Journey, as forms of travel writing. This broadens the category of travel writing, potentially making it more useful.

Travel writing can be broadly defined as a constellation of various types of writing and/or text, connected by a set of "family resemblances." The genre encompasses a wide range of material, including novels, poetry, maps, paintings, sketches, photographs, television programs, and films. The boundaries of the travel writing genre are fuzzy, and there is little point in policing them too rigidly. However, within this larger, looser generic label, one may talk with greater precision of specific modes and sub-genres of travel writing, such as the medieval peregrinatio, early modern relation, eighteenth-century exploration narrative, guidebooks of different eras, and the modern travel book. Each of these sub-genres has its own history, rhetorical conventions, and role in the larger culture of which it is a part.

Travellers' Tales: Fact And Fiction in Travel Writing

Travel writing, a genre that includes the travel book, is a first-person narrative of travel that claims to be a true record of the author's experiences. However, this genre is ambiguous and complexities, as writers must negotiate two roles: reporter to accurately relay information acquired through travel, and story-teller to maintain reader interest and present it in an enjoyable way. This negotiation makes the distinction between fiction and non-fiction in travel writing not as clear-cut as initially assumed.

Travel writing is a textual artifact that has been constructed by its writers and publishers. It involves the creation of a narrative, which often introduces a fictive dimension to the text. This process allows writers to be deceitful or economical with the truth, sometimes suppressing information to make the journey seem more heroic.

Travel writing often commits sins of omission, which problematize its status as a factual genre. However, it is also guilty of sins of commission and subtle elements of fabrication in the telling of the travel tale. In modern travel books, most episodes are written up retrospectively by the writer, rather than being written on the spot. The writer may have a good memory of the original events and may draw upon notes taken at the time. However, there is considerable scope for recreated episodes to take on a fictive colouring.

The extent to which travel writers weave fictional elements into their texts can vary greatly. Some writers faithfully record their experiences but must edit, reconstruct, and subtly distort those experiences in the process of fashioning their

narrative. Others have more wilfully invented details and anecdotes, such as the long history of hoax travel narratives. Even when recounting journeys that did genuinely take place, many authors have fabricated incidents and encounters to capitalize on the reading public's perennial hunger for wonders, exotic curiosities, and sensational titbits.

Travel writers are often as much story-tellers as reporters, having a pronounced propensity for tall tales and intriguing or amusing anecdotes. This blurring of the boundary of fact and fiction and the freedom to interweave story-telling and reportage is arguably part of the attraction of the form. Recent decades have witnessed a wave of travel writing that one might broadly characterise as postmodern in outlook and expression. In travelogues like Bruce Chatwin's In Patagonia and The Songlines (1987), the traveller-narrators often cast themselves in the role of trickster-figures, self-consciously aligning themselves with travel writing's long tradition of tall tales and hoaxes.

Non-fiction in travel writing is often simplistic and requires qualification. Paul Fussell sees it as a creative mediation between fact and fiction, while Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan view it as 'fictions of factual representation'. Travel narratives are selective and fictive, offering the illusion of faithful representations of the world. While acknowledging this doesn't discredit the information provided by travelogues, it's important to remember that the apparent truthfulness and factuality are rhetorical effects. Travel texts are constructed artifacts, and should not be read naively as a transparent window on the world.

The Cultural And Intellectual Status of Travel Writing

Travel writing is a popular genre in our culture today, but it is often viewed dismissively by critics. In our contemporary hierarchy of genres, travel writing sits significantly below more esteemed genres such as the novel, leading to unease among some travel writers about being identified with the form. The genre straddles many generic boundaries and often moves into territory also covered by a broad range of academic disciplines, such as natural history, geography, or anthropology.

Travel writing's relationship with ethnography is replicated in its relationship with most other academic disciplines. The genre has a resolutely amateur or dilettante aspect, which makes it generally perceived as not being at the cutting edge in terms of factual information. However, it is possible to take a more expansive view of the genre, where modern ethnography becomes simply one mode of travel

writing, rather than a separate genre to be sharply distinguished from it.

Travel writing has not always been regarded as such a minor, inconsequential form. There are significant differences between what we now label "travel writing" and the earlier, more eclectic genre known to contemporaries as "voyages and travels." In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, travelogues were central to the canon of respectable, desirable reading, providing a wholly satisfactory blend of literary pleasure and useful knowledge. This difference in attitude to the genre derived from subtle differences in taste and aesthetic expectation. Eighteenth-century writers and readers did not seem to have perceived the same schism between imaginative and factual modes of writing as their modern counterparts, and so felt less anxiety about classing travel narratives as "literature."

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 3- Travel Writing Through The Ages An Overview

Short Summary

In 1130 BCE, Egyptian priest Wenamon made a disastrous voyage from Thebes to Lebanon, but he wrote a report on his misadventures, which is considered the earliest detailed account of a voyage in existence. Travel writing has a long history, with tales passed on by word of mouth and oral traditions. Homer's Odyssey, one of the earliest written accounts of travel, influenced subsequent literature and the evolution of Western travel writing.

The Ancient World

Ancient people traveled for various reasons, including war, trade, religious visits, and maintaining empires. Some traveled for recreational purposes, such as sight-seeing at sites like the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid. Travel-related texts, such as periploi and navigationes, provided navigational directions for sea captains.

More elaborate forms of travel writing were found in the Classical era, with works like Herodotus, Strabo, and Pausanias offering detailed accounts of Greek antiquities and rituals. However, these works rarely provided a first-person narrative of the original travel experience. The Pilgrimage of Egeria, one of the earliest Christian pilgrimages, emphasizes the spiritual significance of the landscapes and devotional practices. Classical literature also featured fictive treatments of travel, such as the Odyssey and Lucian's True History.

Medieval Travellers And Travel Writing

The medieval era produced numerous travel-related texts, including geographies, natural histories, bestiaries, and 'books of wonders'. Asia and Africa were particularly fascinating to European readers, leading to a rich, speculative literature. However, few of these accounts are first-person narratives, often combining observations of Classical authorities with recent reports. These texts often blend factual and fantastical descriptions, with monstrous or miraculous beings projected from European fears and fantasies.

The 'peregrinatio', or pilgrimage narrative, was the most common form of travel in this era. The Crusades took many Christian Europeans to the Near and Middle East, while missionaries and embassies were sent to places like China, India, and Africa. The Travels of Sir John Mandeville, written in 1356, was the most influential travel narrative of the late Middle Ages. Other travel writing genres existed in other cultures, such as Chinese literature, the Islamic world, and the Moroccan qadi.

Early Modern Travel Writing

Christopher Columbus's four voyages between 1492 and 1504 marked a significant shift in European travel and travel writing. His discoveries challenged the medieval worldview and the trust in Classical texts, leading to a new emphasis on empirical inquiry and inductive methods. This led to philosophers like Sir Francis Bacon promoting an intellectual agenda and laying the foundations of modern science. European discovery led to the first successful circumnavigation of the globe by Ferdinand Magellan in 1519. English voyages, led by figures like Walter Ralegh and Henry Hudson, stimulated a wave of travel-related writings and documents, leading to the genre of 'voyages and travels'. The genre was increasingly centered on the report of someone who had made the journey themselves.

Travellers in the early modern era sought information about the New World, Old World, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. The Reformation created a rift between Protestants and Catholics, but many writers recounted their experiences in print. Thomas Coryat, Fynes Morison, and William Lithgow were early examples of a 'literary' mode of travel writing. Most writers were men, with no published accounts by women. The encounter with native Americans sparked philosophical and ethical debates, with some arguing that travel exposed young men to moral dissolution, foreign affectation, and Catholicism. This influenced imaginative

literature, with Thomas More creating satirical travel accounts and Joseph Hall criticizing travel.

The Long Eighteenth Century, 1660–1837

Travel writing in the 18th century gained popularity and prestige, influencing literary forms like poetry and novels. The genre was driven by the increasing mobility of Europe, the development of technologies and infrastructures for travel, and the expansion of print culture. Travel was seen as a crucial part of the New Science of the late 17th century, with the Royal Society promoting travel and the empiricist philosophy of John Locke. William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* established a new standard for exploratory travel writing. The New Science's inductive agenda was further fueled by *Linnaeus' Systema Naturae*, which catalogued the natural world. European and American travelers, such as Captain James Cook, embarked on scientific exploration, often financed by state-sponsored organizations.

The 18th century saw the emergence of the 'tourist', a new type of traveller who was initially seen as a mark of conspicuous privilege. The Grand Tour, an extended visit to Europe, was the only form of tourism widely practiced at the time. The ethos of the Grand Tour was to acquire foreign languages, gather useful information, and visit Roman antiquity.

However, the growing appetite for tourism led to a diversification of tourististic tastes, interests, and itineraries. Many tourists ventured into print, making the late 18th and early 19th centuries a 'tour-writing and tour-publishing age'. Women also had opportunities to travel and publish travelogues, with some published between 1763 and 1800. The writers of touristic travelogues began to focus on the personality of the traveller, expressing their inner thoughts and feelings.

The rise of touristic travel and travel writing in the early nineteenth century was marked by a shift towards commercial and consumerist society. As more people began to travel recreationally, the industry became an industry. Guidebooks for tourists began to emerge in the 1830s, and Thomas Cook introduced the concept of package holidays in the 1840s in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690). As tourism developed, many tourists sought new styles of travel and alternative destinations to demonstrate their moral superiority and discrimination in taste. However, there were also non-turistic travel accounts, such as those by castaways, shipwreck victims, and captives held hostage by hostile tribes.

The Evangelical revival led to the establishment of missionary societies and the abolition of slavery. This period also saw the emergence of a distinctively American tradition of travel writing, with accounts by explorers, settlers, naturalists, and missionaries playing an important role in forming a sense of nationhood.

The Victorian And Edwardian Periods, 1837–1914

In the 19th century, European and US empires expanded, leading to a surge in travel-related writings. These writings, ranging from memoirs to newspaper reports, facilitated European and US expansion. The emergence of race-based'science' in academia fueled a sense of superiority among Europeans and white Americans.

During the Victorian era, travel writing was a significant form of exploration narrative, providing valuable geographical, natural-historical, and ethnographic information about various regions of the world. Explorers were regarded as emblematic figures of imperial masculinity, embodying the highest ideals of science and Christian civilization. Their travel experiences were often rendered in a stirring style, drawing heavily on literary techniques and idioms developed in imperial adventure stories. These genres functioned as an "energising myth of English imperialism," legitimizing the imperial project to domestic audiences while inspiring readers with fantasies of heroic exploits. Travel writing also proliferated as tourism flourished, and many travelers wrote accounts of their experiences. Many sought to get "off the beaten track" and escape the stifling moral codes of the Victorian era. The modern travel book emerged, with writers with established reputations taking up the travelogue form. Women writers also made a significant contribution to the travel writing genre, navigating the constraints of femininity.

Travel themes were frequently used in imaginative and fictive genres, challenging European imperial assumptions. Fiction, poetry, and travel accounts influenced subsequent travel accounts, shaping attitudes towards foreign peoples and places. Examples include Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Herman Melville's Typee, R.L. Stevenson's South Sea tales, and Rudyard Kipling's Kim.

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Travel Writing From 1914 To The Present

The European and American railway networks from the mid-nineteenth century introduced a new mode of transportation, introducing speed and disorientation to travelers. This shifted the Western sense of space and time, generating a modern, industrialized mode of consciousness. The motor car and aeroplane further challenged the tyranny of distance, making travel a mass activity available to almost all members of Western society. This led to a dramatic increase in global interconnectedness, with the modern age of globalisation originating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century era of high imperialism. Modernism, a major cultural movement in the West, was influenced by this globalized society. Travel writing flourished between the First and Second World Wars, with acclaimed travelogues and works exploring subjectivity, memory, and the unconscious.

The British tradition of literary travel writing was continued by writers like Eric Newby, Norman Lewis, Colin Thubron, Jan Morris, Patrick Leigh Fermor, and Dervla Murphy in the post-war era. Their travelogues often adopted a variety of interests and tone markers, with Lewis's writing often journalistic in style. However,

there was a self-deprecating persona and strategy of understatement prevalent in British travel writing.

Jack Kerouac pioneered a different idiom in America, establishing a picaresque, low-life agenda and a fast-paced 'hipster' style. The narrative of scientific exploration gradually fell into abeyance, with professional scientists and social scientists taking on exploratory work. This led to the term 'travel writing' being relegated to a'minor' genre, with critical and commercial fortunes flagging in the decades after World War II. The spread of the internet has also produced a new mode of travel writing, the travel 'blog', which represents a subtle re-negotiation of the boundary between public and private communication.

Unit I - Travel Writing by Carl Thompson - Chapter 3 - Travel Writing Through The Ages An Overview

Detailed Summary

Around 1130 BCE, an Egyptian priest named Wenamon made a voyage from Thebes to Lebanon, but was robbed, chased by pirates, and almost killed. He wrote a report on his misadventures, which is considered the earliest detailed account of a voyage in existence. Travel writing has a long history, with tales of travel passed on by word of mouth. Some of the earliest written treatments of the travel theme include the Epic of Gilgamesh, Homer's Odyssey, and the Biblical books of Genesis and Exodus. The Odyssey, though a fictive account of a legendary traveller, inaugurates the Western tradition of travel writing. It is one of the earliest written accounts of travel and the first text to significantly influence subsequent travel literature.

The Ancient World

Ancient people traveled for various reasons, including war, trade, religious visits, and maintaining empires. Some traveled for recreational purposes, such as visiting sights like the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid. Travel-related texts, such as periploi and navigationes, provided navigational directions for sea captains and were equivalent to itineraria for overland journeys.

In the Classical era, travel writing was more elaborate, with works like Herodotus's The Histories, Strabo's Geography, and Pausanias's Description of Greece offering detailed accounts of Greek antiquities and rituals. However, these works rarely provided a first-person narrative of the original travel experience. Horace's poem 'A Journey to Brundisium', in Book 1 of his Satires, offers a more

personal travel account, providing an important model for later travel writers.

The Pilgrimage of Egeria, one of the earliest accounts of Christian pilgrimage, places more emphasis on the travelling self and the details of the journey than usual in this period. The narrative focuses on the spiritual significance of the landscapes and devotional practices of the people she encounters, making it an impersonal form of travel writing.

Classical literature also featured fictive treatments of travel, such as the Odyssey, Greek romances, and Lucian's True History, which satirized preposterous claims made by travelers in this era.

Medieval Travellers And Travel Writing

The medieval era produced numerous travel-related texts, including geographies, natural histories, bestiaries, and "books of wonders." Asia and Africa were particularly fascinating to European readers, leading to a rich, speculative literature. However, few of these accounts are first-person narratives, as they often combine observations of Classical authorities with more recent reports. This results in a blend of factual and fantastical descriptions of foreign peoples and places, with accounts of monstrous or miraculous beings that are projections of European fears and fantasies.

First-person accounts of actual travels occur most commonly in the form of the 'peregrinatio', or pilgrimage narrative. This form of travel was culturally sanctioned, catering for pilgrims visiting Rome and the Holy Land and local sites of religious significance. Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales provide a vivid depiction of the medieval pilgrimage. Handbooks were available for real-life pilgrims, offering practical and devotional advice. However, the element of travelogue is often subordinated to the text's practical and religious concerns, with little effort to record the events of the journey or the traveller's subjective thoughts and feelings.

Not every traveller in the medieval era was a pilgrim, and men might also travel on church business, as merchants, diplomats, soldiers, and scholars. The Travels of Marco Polo, the most influential travel narrative of the late Middle Ages, was based on his own travels in China and India. Other forms of travel writing existed in other cultures, such as Chinese literature, Islamic world, and Arabic literature.

Early Modern Travel Writing

Christopher Columbus's four voyages between 1492 and 1504 marked a significant shift in European travel and travel writing, introducing a new emphasis on eye-witnessing and empirical inquiry. This led to philosophers like Sir Francis

Bacon advocating for an inductive method of knowledge and a radical reorganization of knowledge. Columbus's voyages initiated an era of European discovery, driven by opportunities for trade, conquest, and colonization, as well as the religious imperative of converting heathen peoples to Christianity.

The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 assigned newly discovered lands beyond Europe to Portugal and Spain, leading to the establishment of lucrative empires in India, South East Asia, Brazil, and central and South America. The Pilgrim Fathers' settlement at Plymouth, Massachusetts, and two voyages to Guyana in South America stimulated a wave of travel-related writings and documents.

The spread of the printing press allowed maps, surveys, and reports relating to new discoveries and conquests to circulate in Europe, despite governments' attempts to control publication of economically and strategically sensitive material. Travel writing gained importance as politicians, merchants, and navigators sought information to enable further expeditions. Editors and publishers began to issue large-scale collections of travel accounts and documents, shaping the genre known as 'voyages and travels'.

In the early modern era, travellers sought information about the New World, Old World, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Travel from the British Isles to the European continent became more difficult after the Reformation, creating a rift between Protestants and Catholics. However, many writers recounted their experiences in print, such as Thomas Coryat, Fynes Morison, and William Lithgow. Most writers were men, reflecting the fewer opportunities women had to travel and the greater difficulties they faced in becoming authors.

Coryat's Crudities is an early example of a 'literary' mode of travel writing, focusing on the traveller's findings and useful data they relayed back to readers. Other travel writings focused on the traveller's findings and the sort of information to record. The encounter with native Americans and the brutal treatment they received prompted philosophical and ethical debates. In fiction, Thomas More mimicked the new travel accounts to great satire in Utopia, while Joseph Hall's Mundus Alter et Idem critiqued the idea of travel. Picaresque fiction emerged, reflecting the loosening of feudal bonds and parodying the idealistic aspirations of chivalric quest romance.

The Long Eighteenth Century, 1660–1837

Travel writing in the eighteenth century gained popularity and prestige, influencing literary forms such as poetry and novels. This period saw an increase in mobility, as feudalism gave way to a more commercial, capitalist society. Advances in technology and infrastructure enabled travel, such as John Harrison's chronometer and steam engine usage. As a result, more people traveled, both within Europe and beyond, as European exploration and colonization continued.

The key developments in travel and travel writing in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were grouped under exploration and tourism. Most travelers were expected to set out in search of useful knowledge, regardless of their travel purpose. The New Science of the late seventeenth century promoted travel and coordinated activities of travelers, with the Royal Society and John Locke playing significant roles. William Dampier's *New Voyage Round the World* established a new standard for exploratory travel writing, combining detail with a plain prose style.

The publication of *Systema Naturae* by Linnaeus further stimulated the New Science's inductive agenda and desire to accumulate comprehensive knowledge of the natural world. The three voyages of Captain James Cook to the Pacific Ocean inaugurated an era of more overtly scientific exploration by European and American travellers. Many of this exploration was state-sponsored or financed by organizations with close ties to contemporary policy-makers.

Sir Joseph Banks, a principal patron of exploratory endeavor in Britain, arranged the transportation of plant species around the British empire and instigated the use of Botany Bay in Australia as a penal colony. His accounts of British exploration soon became one of the most popular branches of the voyages and travels genre.

The 18th century saw the emergence of the 'tourist' as a distinct type of traveller, with the term initially holding no negative connotations. The only form of tourism widely practiced was the 'Grand Tour', an extended visit to the European continent, particularly France and Italy, for young male aristocrats. The ethos of the Grand Tour was to gather useful information and visit Roman antiquity, which was seen as a key benchmark of taste and cultivation. However, tourism was increasingly taken up by the middle classes, with the number of middle-class travelers to the continent rising sharply from the 1760s. The growing appetite for tourism brought with it a diversification of tourististic tastes, interests, and itineraries. Some tourists clung to the classicism of the traditional Grand Tour, while others preferred regions

seemingly little touched by contemporary modernity. The influence of Ossian poems and the cult of the picturesque encouraged a greater aesthetic appreciation of landscape and the pursuit of improving agricultural practices. Many of these tourists ventured into print, making the late 18th and early 19th centuries a 'tour-writing and tour-publishing age'. The number of published female travel writers rose dramatically after 1800. For the writers of touristic travelogues, the traditional remit of reporting back useful knowledge became increasingly difficult to fulfill.

The burgeoning of touristic travel and travel writing in the early nineteenth century led to much hostile commentary. By the 1830s, the tourist had become emblematic of modernity and the more commercial and consumerist society brought into being by the Industrial Revolution. As more people began to travel recreationally and extensive infrastructures developed to cater to them, tourism itself began to seem an industry. In the 1840s, Thomas Cook introduced the concept of package holidays, which allowed travelers to differentiate themselves from other tourists and seek new styles of travel and alternative destinations.

There were also non-turkic travellers and travel accounts, such as castaways, shipwreck victims, and captives held hostage by barbarous tribes and hostile foreign regimes. Mary Rowlandson's *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682) is an early example of this genre. The Evangelical revival of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries led to the establishment of missionary societies, and accounts of missions to "heathen" tribes soon became another popular strand of the voyages and travels genre.

A distinctively American tradition of travel writing emerged after the creation of the USA in 1776. Accounts by explorers, settlers, naturalists, and missionaries played an important role in forming a sense of nationhood and fostering the growth of the young nation's cultural identity. Novelists like Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels contributed to this expansion.

The Victorian And Edwardian Periods, 1837–1914

In the 19th century, European empires expanded significantly, reaching their peak in the early 20th century. The USA consolidated its control over 48 contiguous states, adding Alaska and Hawaii in 1867 and 1898 respectively. This period saw the emergence of a'science' of race in the European and American academia, leading to a sense of innate superiority among Europeans and white Americans. Travel-related writings, ranging from memoirs to newspaper reports, were deeply suffused with

these notions of cultural and racial superiority, inculcating them in their readership.

In the era of high imperialism, travel writing played a crucial role in providing valuable geographical, natural-historical, and ethnographic information about various regions of the world. Explorers were seen as emblematic figures, embodying the highest ideals of science and Christian civilization. Their travel experiences were often rendered in a stirring style that drew heavily on literary techniques and idioms developed in imperial adventure stories. These fictional tales often drew on contemporary accounts of exploration for their settings and plots, functioning as an "energising myth of English imperialism."

Travel writing also proliferated during this period, with tourism flourishing and a tourist infrastructure consolidated in both Europe and the USA. Many travelers wrote accounts of their experiences, offering a variety of styles and interests. Some offered superficial sketches or recollections of picturesque or exotic regions, while others sought to reflect more insightfully on their destinations. Many sought to get off the beaten track and escape the moral codes of the Victorian era, seeking authenticity and sensuality in the sunny climes of Italy and the Middle East.

The emergence of the more self-consciously "literary" mode of travel writing, known as the modern travel book, was significant, as many writers with established reputations in other literary genres took up the travelogue form. Women writers also made a significant contribution to the travel writing genre, although they had to negotiate the highly constraining norms of femininity that operated in this era. Notable female writers include Flora Tristan, Isabelle Eberhardt, Catherine Parr Traill, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Harriet Martineau, Louisa Ann Meredith, Gertrude Bell, and Edith Wharton.

Travel themes were frequently used by writers in imaginative or fictive genres, challenging the assumptions of cultural and moral superiority. Examples include Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Herman Melville's Typee, R.L. Stevenson's South Sea tales, and Rudyard Kipling's Kim. Travel was also a theme in poetry, with works like A.H. Clough's Amours de Voyage, Walt Whitman's Song of the Open Road, and Arthur Rimbaud's The Drunken Boat shaping travelers' attitudes towards other peoples and places.

Travel Writing From 1914 To The Present

The European and American railway networks, which expanded from the mid-nineteenth century, introduced a new mode of transportation, introducing speed and

disorientation to travelers. This shifted the Western sense of space and time, generating a modern, industrialized mode of consciousness. The motor car and aeroplane further challenged the tyranny of distance, introducing new sensory experiences. As travel became a mass activity, it became more accessible to almost all members of Western society. This development has been regarded as a laudable democratisation of travel or a deplorable vulgarisation.

The modern age of globalisation has its origins in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century era of high imperialism. Modernism, a major cultural movement in the West, was a product of this more mobile and globalised society. Writers and artists like T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Joseph Conrad, and Pablo Picasso were émigrés, living much of their adult lives outside their birth countries. Travel writing flourished between the First and Second World Wars, both in experimental and traditional forms. Critically acclaimed travelogues of the 1920s included T.E. Lawrence's The Seven Pillars of Wisdom, D.H. Lawrence's Sea and Sardinia, Mornings in Mexico, and Voyage au Congo. Travel writing's appeal grew further in the 1930s, with figures like George Orwell, Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Peter Fleming, Robert Byron, Ernest Hemingway, Rebecca West, and Freya Stark using it for various purposes.

The British tradition of literary travel writing was continued in the post-war era by writers like Eric Newby, Norman Lewis, Colin Thubron, Jan Morris, Patrick Leigh Fermor, and Irish writer Dervla Murphy. Their travelogues often adopted a variety of interests and tone markers, with Lewis's travel writing often being journalistic in style. However, there was a self-deprecating persona and strategy of understatement prevalent in much British travel writing of both the 1930s and the post-war era.

Jack Kerouac pioneered a differentidiom in America, creating a picaresque, low-life agenda and a fast-paced 'hipster' style. While literary and journalistic travelogues flourished in the twentieth century, the narrative of scientific exploration gradually fell into abeyance. Apsley Cherry-Garrard's The Worst Journey in the World (1922) represents the culmimination of the nineteenth-century cult of the explorer. Professional scientists and social scientists began to undertake exploratory work, aiming at scientific specialists rather than the general reader.

The term 'voyages and travels' gave way to the modern label for the genre, 'travel writing', which lost intellectual status and cultural prestige. Critical and popular

interest in the form was rekindled in the late 1970s, with notable works such as Paul Theroux's The Great Railway Bazaar: By Train through Asia, Peter Matthiesen's The Snow Leopard, Bruce Chatwin's In Patagonia, and Robyn Davidson's Tracks.

The spread of the internet has also produced a new mode of travel writing, the travel 'blog' or weblog. Travel blogs represent a subtle re-negotiation of the boundary between public and private communication and have greatly increased the volume of travel writing being produced annually.

Unit II - *The Great Hedge of India* - Roy Moxham

Short Summary

In The Great Hedge of India, Roy Moxham embarks on a captivating exploration of a forgotten piece of colonial history that reveals the lengths to which the British Empire went to maintain control over its territories. The journey begins with Moxham's encounter with a fleeting reference to an enormous hedge spanning over 2,500 miles across India, constructed to enforce the British salt tax. This odd mention signals Moxham, filling him with a sense of wonder and prompting him to learn about the origin of this strange and apparently impossible construction. The British absolutists who controlled the colonial government understood the omnipresence of salt in peoples' lives and therefore their dependence on it, especially in a country where people sweated a lot and lost a lot of salt. So by putting a heavy tax on salt, the British made the easiest commodity for a person human being to live, into a money-earning commodity. The salt tax in British India affected the lower class people of society, who could not afford even the banned salt, and caused terrible salt hunger and many health problems. Moxham describes how this cruel and abusive tax became one of the tools of colonial domination, and how antagonism and discontent grew in the hearts of the people of India because of it.

To effect the collection of salt taxes imposed by the British, a number of checkpoints were created which later developed into the Great Hedge. The thorny structure, created from thickly sown indigenous plants, acted as subordinate British power over the management of resources and commerce. Moxham's passion for exhausting scrutiny of every detail facilitates a voyage to archival maps and documents, which in turn helps to trace the hedge in the geography of northern India. While he uncovers bureaucratic paper trails concerning its making and upkeep,

readers understand not only the colonial ideology but also the barriers it faced in implementing its systems.

Still, Moxham's excursion leads him to such places as Agra, a significant center for the salt trade, where he finds the extensively courted historical legacy of this city. Here, he struggles with locating the edge waste, for most of it has either been assimilated into the city or lost to history. His journeys take him through different terrains where contrary to the densifying urbanization, he awaits the return of familiar tamarind trees and the silent historians of the hedge. Enduring and long-standing are the emotions of these trees; which bear colonial infrastructure's lasting effect on both the territory and its inhabitants.

In an assessment of the Chambal region, notorious for its extreme geography, as well as its history, Moxham draws attention to the geographic barriers which the British had to overcome in order to extend the salt tax. This alien environment encouraged rebellion, as the indigenous population managed to adapt to the colonial excesses. Moxham's thoughts on this region also bring to light the fragility of the colonizers' rule as well as the resilience of the oppressed people who were always fighting back.

The Great Hedge ultimately comes to symbolize both subjugation and defiance. While the purpose of the hedge was to impose British taxation policy, it went on to unite and incite dissatisfaction from its intended subjects. Moxham links this hedge back to the greater picture of Indian Independence and in particular, its connection to Mahatma Gandhi's Salt March which was the first act of civil disobedience against British colonization.

Moxham's journey paints the picture of colonialism, its repercussions on humanity, and the strength of the people who were subjected to such rule. The Great Hedge of India is a history book but it is also a bitter reminder of the presenteeism and the victory of the people within their right to freedom and justice. Moxham's intricate storytelling goes further beyond the visible beauty in landscapes and uncovers the historical depth that lies beneath it linking the past with the present in a simple but deep discussion of identity, struggle, and memory.

Unit II - *The Great Hedge of India* - Roy Moxham

Chapterwise Summary

Chapter 1

Roy Moxham in the first chapter, "A Hedge?" talks about his initial experience with the existence of the Great Hedge which leads him to research more about it. While reading a historical text, he just comes across a short line that says in the 19th century, the British had constructed a huge hedge across India to prevent salt smuggling. This brief piece of information intrigues him and he becomes immensely interested in the idea that such an unlikely building possibly existed.

Moxham, a British book conservator and a historian is both puzzled and intrigued. A hedge that can run over 2600 miles around and is Built for tax purposes. Such notions appear to be almost imaginary, and he begins to comprehend that there is not much knowledge on this enormous wall. It is so brief that he questions its actual existence or maybe it is an overstatement or an interpretation of what was said. But such a hedge itself is monumental and its main function is to be a component of a complex system of British taxation; such circumstances make Moxham question and investigate further.

This chapter sets the stage for Moxham's investigation by exploring the central paradox of the hedge itself: how a relatively simple living plant barrier, was used as a complex mechanism for enforcing one of the British Empire's most controversial taxes. Moxham by himself goes out on an expedition to investigate the past of the Great Hedge. So he not only sought its existence but also for the need the British felt to establish it and the effects it had on the Indian people during colonialism.

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, "The Salt Tax", Roy Moxham provides a historical and economic context of why salt became such an important asset in British India. Salt was a necessity in India not only for seasoning, but also for preserving food, medicinal, and even to sustain life in a country with a hot climate for handling a situation where the body was sweating a lot. Understandably, the British colonial government saw salt as a source of revenue and used every excuse to impose an exorbitant tax on it.

The impact of the salt tax was severe on the country's population and even more on the lower classes of Indian society. This high tax put a basic necessity nearly out of reach for many Indians and hence many people suffered from the cost. The taxed salt was a problem for families who could barely afford to purchase it, and those who

could not suffer from the health complications, which resulted from inadequate supplies of salt. This tax policy was seen as one of the worst forms of colonial exploitation and fueled hatred towards the colonial masters by the colonized.

To ensure that no one evaded the salt tax and to tackle the problem of smuggling the tax-free salt, the British laid down barriers and some guards; as a result, there came to be the Great Hedge. This thorny barrier became the major strategy, which the British government used in containing salt smuggling between the saline and the non-saline areas. In this chapter, Moxham dwells upon the origin of the salt tax and mentions the hedge as a part of colonialism that aimed at monopolizing resources for the benefit of the colonial power. Thus, by detailing the prime fiscal reasons for the salt tax in the next chapter, the author establishes how far the British Empire was willing to go to implement and extract this cruel policy while also revealing the bitter toll this tax took on the Indian population and world foreshadowing the historical and ethical dilemmas that Moxham will explore next.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3, “Maps”, by Roy Moxham, gives an account of how he got into the research on the Great Hedge, starting with the search for maps and documents that would provide evidence of the hedge’s existence and location. He finds out very soon that getting specific information on a long-forgotten hedge especially one that is over 2500m in length will not be easy but he is ready to try them out.

After a long and thorough search with access to libraries, government records, and old maps and cartographic references, Moxham stumbles upon a few old maps and descriptions of the hedge. These maps add up to the understanding that the hedge ran right through Northern India and through various terrains, villages, and other geographical formations. Moxham also retrieves how the British officials and surveyors represented the hedge and its checkposts to enforce the salt tax. The records contain official observations on the hedge construction and preservation, and problems the British encountered because of the vast territory and climatic conditions of India.

This chapter reveals much about Moxham’s meticulous research method as he collects fragments of a lost story. With maps, he starts constructing the general idea about the size of the Great Hedge and understanding the actual meaning of the construction as a sign of colonial power. His findings serve as the groundwork for

his ongoing quest to physically trace the remnants of the hedge and uncover its full story.

Chapter 4

In Chapter 4: “The Customs Line” of the book, Roy Moxham focuses on the checkpoint system or barriers founded by the British in northern India mainly to collect the revenue of salt and other taxes. The Customs Line was not a definitive roadblock but a series of posts, trenches, palisades, and in the end, the Great Hedge. These were intended to stop the transportation of goods and salt, especially across boundaries of the British territories and regions that had lower or no taxes.

According to Moxham, this Customs Line, turned into one of the largest and hardest tax-collection systems in the globe, covering, thousands of miles with a strong force of guards. In order to ensure that the Customs Line was virtually impassable the British authorities spent a great amount of money and enlisted the services of thousands of Indians to construct it. However, the Customs Line was highly inefficient and costly to maintain since the mentioned barriers were difficult to operate, and smugglers began exploiting the gaps.

Eventually, the Customs Line became a natural barrier for living plants: bushes with thorns and especially dense foliage that are hard to cut through. As one of the components of the Customs Line, such a hedge represented British domination over Indian materials and led to locals’ dissatisfaction because it complicated their lives. Thus, in this chapter, Moxham builds upon this evolution of the Customs Line from just a random series of a number of check posts to the Great Hedge and reveals how this colonial architecture for the key function of the British to collect taxes was not only oppressive but also an agent of resistance for the Indian populace.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, Moxham switches to his own journey through India, to Agra, where he begins to look for traces of the Great Hedge Himself. Another important point of the Defence Line was the historical city of Agra famous for the Taj Mahal. Moxham paid a visit to Agra for the reason that it was at the center of salt trade and collection of taxes where British officials utilized the region as a major control point along the Great Hedge.

Moxham gives the reader his perception of Agra, where the ancientness of the city, on the one hand, and the colonization impact on it, on the other, are depicted. In his search for information on the hedge, he consults historical records,

and interviews historians and other people who might know something about the hedge. However, he faces certain problems as most of the hedge is no longer visible as land has been developed or used for construction and agriculture activities, or has simply decayed naturally with time due to growth in the urban area. Moxham's visit to Agra makes it clear how much physical evidence can be gathered for an experience that has been deliberately cleared from the historical record. As the chapters progress, he starts to acknowledge that the hedge, which he once knew to have been enormous and important, has almost become invisible today, both in terms of the immediate municipal environment and historical period.

Chapter 6

Chapter six of the book, "The Customs Hedge", authored by Roy Moxham, gives a detailed insight into the change of the Customs Line to the Customs Hedge. This living barrier transformed into a thorny hedge that is over 2,500 kilometers long in the Indian territory and it became multi-functional working as the British government's state-of-the-art tool to curb smuggling and implement the salt tax. Thus, Moxham goes on to narrate how British authorities were keen to grow this hedge, provided it was a thick impenetrable one that would always remain a solid barrier.

The chapter outlines how the hedge was created which included planting various types of trees and shrubs; it notes that only trees that have thick and prickly growths like the Indian plum and babool (Acacia) were planted. The hedge also became remarkably tall, with some of the segments growing above twelve feet in height and fourteen feet in width. This hedge was constructed as a large and intricate structure that called for thousands of workers to have been employed. The British relied on local labor and guards to grow, maintain, and guard the hedge – this was done under brutal conditions at a low wage. Moxham delves into the different operational issues and the high cost that accompanies the maintenance of the Hedge for Customs. It required regular maintenance in order to remain functional, especially in environments that had heavy rainfall, scorching heat, and monsoons. Further, parts of the hedge were knocked down by wild animals, local residents, and smugglers who were all desperate to ferry salt across the border. These problems presented here led the British government to establish a vast bureaucracy solely for hedge maintenance, including supervisors and guards who were constantly monitoring the hedge. The Customs Hedge not only stopped the flow of salt but also restricted the movement of people, animals, and goods by inhibiting trade and normal life for

countless numbers of Indians. Gradually, many of the inhabitants came to develop considerable hostility toward the hedge, regarding it as a colonial implement of repression. The British did know of this resentment, but they persisted with the salt tax as it produced a large chunk of the revenue. Explaining how the Customs Hedge incurred enormous bitterness over colonial rule, Moxham writes that. This chapter focuses on the strategies by which the British Empire sought to maintain the supremacy of economic interests over the welfare of the Indian people – the moral cost of the hedge. By reviewing his findings, Moxham explains the fact that the hedge was not only the physical divider – it also reflected the oppression inherent in British colonialism.

Chapter 7

In Chapter 7, Salt, Roy Moxham continues the discussion on the role of salt in the context of Indian history and culture while stressing the resource's economic and biological functions. Salt was important for consumption, particularly in India where the hot climate necessitated its use since the body lost electrolytes through sweating. Another advantage of food processing was food preservation which constituted a very significant component in the Indian diet. The British being aware of the importance of salt ensured that they collected a lot of from it by placing a high tax on an almost essential commodity. Moxham made an account of how the tax affected the people of India most especially the poor since salt is a basic necessity in their day to day lives. Lack of salt resulted in dehydration, cramps, and other related ailments among families who were denied the compound. The price of this taxed salt was also very expensive, and those who could not afford such high prices opted for smuggling, which resulted in the building of the Customs Hedge to ensure that smuggled salt did not enter British territories. The chapter in question demonstrates how the British were able to control the production of salt to the extent that they banned local production and made Indians purchase the sulphurated salt that was controlled by the British at high taxes. This monopoly on salt only heightened people's disdain for the colonial authorities as it was an outright oppression of the Indian people. Applying historical analysis, Moxham describes the evolution of salt from a necessity in people's everyday lives and a sign of their subjection to the economic power of the government to an object of protest. Before revealing the symbolic meaning of the substance in the future, Moxham describes to the readers the oppressive role of the salt tax and its effects. This chapter pays attention to how a small commodity such as

salt turns into a symbol of authority and independence which is a significant dimension of fighting against the British in India.

Chapter 8

In the chapter, "A Ridiculous Obsession" of Chapter 8, Roy Moxham dwells upon the British Empire's obsession and extremities of how the Great Hedge was used and built to enforce the salt tax. He cannot understand why there was this 'insane demand' to construct a huge, prickly fence with the sole aim of controlling the migration of salty water, which is quite understandable knowing fully well that the punishment did not fit the crime. Moxham demonstrates that to build and support this hedge British officials endeavored, lost sight of the main goal due to obsession with getting revenues, invested countless amount of resources, and employed a large number of people to protect and preserve this hedge. He demonstrates how the hedge which stretched over 2500 miles created headaches for the organization in terms of logistics and administration. It was very expensive to maintain; it could easily be damaged by forces of nature; and it needed a huge formal apparatus for oversight. However, despite all these provoking factors the British government continued with its adamant bureaucratic approach of collecting this tax irrespective of the consequences. The chapter under discussion emphasizes that the hedge represented the colonial British government's wrong priorities and the degree of domination it aimed to achieve in India. Thus, using the arguments of the social and economic irrationality of the hedge, Moxham argues that it was the enumeration of colonial policies, and this hedge was a perfect example of how misguided colonial policies could become the objective of self-defense. The hedge is there to remind the reader of how the British Empire cared more about their earnings than about Indian lives, this is echoed by Moxham's utterance of disbelief. This type of message is introduced by the author of this chapter where readers are forced to think about the suffering and losses that the colonial policies entailed and were as useless as they were oppressive.

Chapter 9

In Chapter 9, titled "Rebellion", Roy Moxham tells the story of how the oppressive re-creation and extension of the physical structure of the salt tax incited Indians and became the embodiment of anti-colonial rebellion. The chapter outlines the effects of the salt tax as it escalated the suffering of the Indian population, and consequently provoked people's anger. Over time, as the people felt the burden of

the tax, the hedge slowly came to signify the difficult times for the people and the greedy negative aspects of the British in Ireland. According to Moxham, the economic pressure, and perceived unfairness led to rebellion as many Indians resorted to smuggling salt across the hedge. Despite the British efforts made in attempting to curtail such actions through mobilizing patrols and arrests, the spirit of rebellion continued to rise. This chapter correlates the emergence of the opposition to the salt tax with the growth of Indian nationalism and establishes the centrality of salt in the Indian bid for independence. The chapter also raises the prospect of how salt would become the focal point of one of the most famous protests of the British colonies' fight for independence, led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930 known as the Salt March or the Salt Satyagraha. As Moxham describes, for Gandhi it was clear that the salt tax was ideal for non-violent civil disobedience because indeed, salt is universally necessary so everyone needs it. As stated in Rebellion Moxham analysed how British Bengal the great hedge and salt as a tax created means for unity and rebellion among Indians. This chapter lays the foundation to transform salt from a mere business entity to a political tool and from a political tool to be a symbol of rebellion which will lead to further revolts to gain independence for India.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 "Tamarind Trees", Roy Moxham describes how his exploration of India continues, even more than six years later, in the quest to trace the far-fetched biological or structural existence of the Great Hedge. Often found growing off roads and hence eased into several agricultural fields and village perimeters, tamarind trees emerge in every aspect of the study as important components. Although the hedge itself is for the most part no more, Moxham discovers that the remains of the customs line which were usually bordered by growing tamarind trees still stand as mute heretics to that history that everyone seems to have forgotten.

Moxham travels to regions and villages where tamarind trees grow, tracing any possible remains of the hedge using the trees as points of reference. There are some who can only recount the tales or practices associated with the customs line, but no one seems to have any information as to the hedge itself. These long-standing trees known as tamarind trees provide a link to Moxham and all readers thanks to their connection to the oppressive architecture of British colonialism that once dominated their spatial geography.

As the chapter examines, the natural order does not relent in the face of human encroachment, depicted by tamarind trees that grow in defiance where the man-made hedge has long since disappeared. To Moxham, these trees represent a landscape and a people that thrived beyond the reach of, and even in spite of, colonization. Tamarind Trees by Moxham therefore depicts that physical evidence of the hedge may be vanishing, nevertheless, Indian lives and their lands do bear some scar of having been impacted by the hedge.

Chapter 11

In Chapter 11 of "The Chambal", Roy Moxham embarks on a journey that is focused on the Chambal region, rather infamous for its geographical difficulties and history with bandits. The Chambal River valley, with its deep gorges and barren lands, was not only difficult for the British but also disheartening when they sought to extend the Great Hedge and impose salt tax in that region. The chapter describes the natural barriers the British encountered in their efforts of colonization as well as the presence of smuggling activities that existed above the Customs Line that was enforced in this area.

In addition, Moxham also describes the social and historical aspects of Chambal, which also includes its imagery of being always friendly to the rebels who fought against British rule. He explains how the harsh geography made it difficult for the British to construct and safeguard the hedge in this particular area and this region was famed for salt theft. Smugglers, who were aware of the terrain, stole bundles of weapons across the British Customs Line built on Chambal.

As a result of his journeys in the Chambal, Moxham's respect and admiration for the people of this region highly appreciate how they persevered against harsh conditions. The chapter discusses how, even with the stiffest controls imposed by the salt tax and the hedge, Indians still managed to resist encroachment and uphold their freedom. If the Chambal region represents one of the most vivid traditions of rebellion and refuses to be tamed, it is because quite a few parts of India were able to contain that spirit even in the face of the commanding British Empire.

In this respect, Chambal exemplifies both the frailty of colonialism and the endurance of subordinate peoples who resisted, adjusted to, and often flouted colonial rule.

Unit II - *The Great Hedge of India* - Roy Moxham

Critical Summary

Roy Moxham's *The Great Hedge of India* is a compelling historical account of the ambitious and ultimately disastrous project to construct a 2,500-mile hedge across the Indian subcontinent during British rule. Moxham meticulously weaves together archival research, personal accounts, and captivating storytelling to present a nuanced and multifaceted portrait of this grand undertaking.

Roy Moxham's The Great Hedge of India is more than just a historical account of an ambitious engineering project. It is a captivating narrative that explores the intricate web of power, ambition, and human suffering woven into the fabric of British colonialism. Through meticulous research and evocative storytelling, Moxham unveils the story of the Great Hedge, a 2,500-mile barrier constructed across the Indian subcontinent in the 19th century, revealing its profound impact on the landscape, the people, and the very soul of India.

The book begins by introducing the grand vision behind the Hedge – an attempt by the British East India Company to control trade, suppress smuggling, and consolidate its hold on the subcontinent. Moxham meticulously details the logistical challenges of such an undertaking, the sheer scale of manpower deployed, and the incredible lengths to which the British went to achieve their goal. From the cultivation of thorny acacia trees to the construction of vast infrastructure, the Hedge was a testament to the audacity and ambition of imperial power.

However, beneath this veneer of technological prowess lies a story of human hardship and resistance. Moxham shines a light on the devastating impact of the Hedge on the Indian population. The construction forced people to relinquish their land, provide unpaid labor, and endure severe hardships, highlighting the callous disregard for the lives and livelihoods of those deemed "lesser" by the British. The Hedge became a physical manifestation of imperial dominance, dividing communities and disrupting traditional ways of life.

The narrative also reveals the fierce resistance that arose against the Hedge. Moxham chronicles acts of defiance, both subtle and overt, from the theft of seedlings to outright revolts, highlighting the innate human spirit's refusal to be subdued. These acts of resistance, though often suppressed, serve as a reminder of the resilience of the Indian people in the face of oppression.

Beyond the physical barrier itself, the book explores the symbolic significance of the Hedge as a tool of control and a representation of imperial ideology. Moxham delves into the ways in which the Hedge shaped the landscape, impacted local economies, and created an environment of fear and mistrust. He argues that it served as a constant reminder of British authority, a physical embodiment of the social and political divisions imposed by colonial rule.

The book's ultimate strength lies in its nuanced critique of British colonialism. Moxham's meticulous research reveals the devastating consequences of imperial ambition and the inherent contradictions of a system built on exploitation and control. He challenges the romanticized narratives of colonial expansion and compels readers to confront the uncomfortable truths about the human cost of empire.

The Great Hedge of India is not just a story of a monumental project; it is a story of the human struggle against oppression, a testament to resilience, and a reminder of the enduring scars left by colonialism. Moxham's masterful storytelling challenges readers to engage with the complexities of history, to consider the often-hidden consequences of grand ambitions, and to understand the profound impact of colonialism on the lives of those who lived under its shadow.

Moxham takes the reader on a journey through the history of the Great Hedge, spanning decades and traversing vast distances across the Indian subcontinent. Through meticulous research and vivid descriptions, he brings the landscape, the people, and the events to life, allowing the reader to experience the project as if they were present.

The book unveils the incredible diversity of India's landscape, from the arid plains of Punjab to the lush forests of Bengal. Moxham describes the challenges of constructing the Hedge in such varied terrains, providing a unique perspective on the natural world and its relationship to human endeavors.

Moxham explores the impact of the Hedge on various communities and cultures across India. He delves into the lives of those who were forced to labor on the project, those who resisted its construction, and those whose lives were transformed by its presence. This exploration creates a sense of cultural immersion for the reader, offering glimpses into the diverse ways of life that existed within British India.

Moxham's research unearths a forgotten chapter in India's history, bringing to light the lives and stories of those who were impacted by the Great Hedge. He reveals the hidden struggles, the silent suffering, and the acts of defiance that shaped

the landscape of the subcontinent. This journey into the past provides a fresh perspective on a period that is often misunderstood or overlooked.

Moxham's evocative prose and detailed descriptions create a tangible sense of place. He paints vivid pictures of the Hedge itself, its immense scale, its impact on the environment, and its lasting presence across the Indian landscape. He transports the reader to the heart of the project, allowing them to experience the grandeur and the hardship associated with its construction.

The Great Hedge of India doesn't follow the traditional structure of a travelogue, it offers a unique and compelling journey through time and space. Moxham's meticulous research and vivid storytelling allow the reader to experience the history of the Hedge as if they were traversing its length, encountering its diverse landscapes and diverse peoples, and exploring its lasting impact on the Indian subcontinent.

Unit II - *The Great Hedge of India* - Roy Moxham

Themes

A Monument to Imperial Power:

The Great Hedge, initiated in 1801 and spanning decades, was intended to be a physical manifestation of British imperial power. Its purpose was to control trade, curtail smuggling, and facilitate revenue collection. Moxham highlights the grandiose vision behind the project, emphasizing its ambitious scale and the sheer manpower deployed to achieve it. He meticulously details the technical challenges, logistical complexities, and ecological consequences of constructing such a vast barrier across diverse landscapes.

A Landscape of Resistance and Discontent:

While the book chronicles the technical aspects of the Hedge's construction, it also vividly captures the human cost of this project. Moxham exposes the injustices faced by the Indian population, who were forced to provide labor, land, and resources for the Hedge. He details the instances of rebellion, resistance, and hardship endured by the people whose lives were irrevocably altered by the Hedge's presence. He portrays the project as a source of social and economic disruption, creating divisions and fueling resentment against British rule.

Beyond the Physical Barrier:

The Great Hedge of India goes beyond merely describing a physical structure. Moxham delves into the symbolic significance of the Hedge as a representation of imperial ambition and a tool of control. He explores its impact on the Indian

landscape, its effects on local economies, and its role in shaping the social and political landscape of the subcontinent. Moxham's research reveals the profound and enduring consequences of the Hedge, even after its dismantling in the mid-19th century.

A Critical Examination of Empire:

Moxham's work is not simply a neutral account of the Hedge's history. It offers a critical perspective on British colonialism, showcasing its flaws and exposing its impact on the Indian people. By highlighting the exploitation, hardship, and resistance that accompanied the Hedge's construction, the book compels readers to question the supposed benefits of imperial expansion and recognize the inherent contradictions of colonial rule.

Unit III - *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India* by William Dalrymple

Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India by William Dalrymple is a fascinating exploration of the interplay between modernity and spirituality in India. India is a country which is deep in ancient beliefs and traditions. Since it came out in 2009, the book has been a collection of nine images, each telling the story of a different person in India who practices a different form of spirituality. This method lets Dalrymple get into the lives of his subjects in great detail, giving a very full picture of Indian spirituality in the modern world. Dalrymple shows how the sacred can last through these nine lives and how tradition and religion can stand up to the pressures of modern life.

Introduction

Nine Lives by Dalrymple is neither a travelogue nor a standard academic study of religious practices. Instead, it is an anthropological look at nine people, each with their own unique spiritual path. In India, these lives cover a wide range of religious and philosophical views, from Jainism and Buddhism to Sufism and Hinduism. Dalrymple looks into how faith affects people's lives and communities through these personal stories. He also looks into how modernity and economic pressures change or even threaten these practices.

People in *Nine Lives* are mostly normal people, like a Jain nun, a Baul singer, a Tantric practitioner, a Dalit who paints dead bodies into idols, and others. Even though Dalrymple's characters seem to have very different lives, they all have a

strong devotion to a certain religious or spiritual way. The first-person narration of each life story makes the story feel personal and current, as if the reader were hearing each person's story directly. This is how Dalrymple makes his characters more real and draws readers into the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual problems they face.

Plot Summary of *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*

Nine Lives has nine stories, and each one shows a different way to explore your spirituality and stay committed to it. Dalrymple's writing about each character shows how spiritual devotion can show up in very different ways, depending on the person's social and cultural past but still sharing a desire to find meaning.

Dalrymple is able to explore the variety of Indian spirituality without any abstract philosophical debates. In this book, each part is about a different life and tells its own story. This episodic structure with each story standing on its own while also adds to a bigger picture of Indian spirituality. Dalrymple's writing is simple and clear, which lets the opinions of the people he writes about come through. His writing is kind and respectful, and it doesn't use the romanticisation or exoticism that is common in Western writing about Eastern faith.

Dalrymple writes in a way that comes from his work as a scholar and reporter. He weaves the personal stories of his subjects into the bigger picture of history. This gives readers a sense of how each person's faith and social background shapes their life.

1. The Jain Nun

In the first story, Dalrymple tells about the life of a Jain nun who gives up everything in an extreme way. Jainism's strict moral rules can be seen in her vows of modesty, poverty, and telling the truth, which show her dedication to nonviolence and self-discipline. Dalrymple describes her life as a journey of great suffering, one that required her to cut ties with her family and live a life of constant wandering and strict asceticism. In this story, the nun has to deal with the emotional weight of giving up everything because she feels spiritual duty and personal connection at the same time.

The way Dalrymple writes about the Jain nun shows how spiritual discipline is both a way to become enlightened and a big task in Jainism. The nun's struggle to keep her vows in a society that doesn't always understand or value ascetic practices shows the larger conflict between spiritual goals and the needs of today's

materialistic world. This story is used by Dalrymple to show how deep the ethical ideas in Jain thought are while also showing the personal costs of giving up everything completely.

2. The Theyyam Dancer:

Theyyam is a traditional form of performance art from Kerala in southern India. The story of the Theyyam dancer takes readers into the ritualistic world of Theyyam, where performers become gods and ancestral spirits through complicated rituals. Dalrymple's description of the Theyyam dancer is deeply rooted in cultural detail. He captures the artistic and spiritual importance of Theyyam while also highlighting its role as a way to make a living. The dancer, a man from a caste that is on the outside, sees Theyyam as both a holy duty and a way to make money. He takes his part with great respect, even though it is hard for him financially.

By telling this story, Dalrymple shows how caste, wealth, and faith are linked. Rich people often pay for Theyyam performances, which creates a power dynamic in which the artist is both admired and ruled over. This dual role makes people think about how spirituality can be both a source of power and a source of abuse, based on the social setting. Dalrymple's story shows how strong people have to be to keep cultural traditions alive in a world where holy practices are turned into goods.

3. The Sufi Mystic:

In *Nine Lives*, the Sufi mystic is a symbol of the mixed-up traditions in Indian Islam. Sufi rituals often stress love, tolerance, and harmony between different faiths. Dalrymple shows how dedicated the mystic is to an inclusive Islam based on peace and compassion, even though he has to deal with pressures from a religious environment that is becoming more divided. The mystic's life shows why Sufism is still popular, especially its ability to get past religious differences and stress love for everyone.

Dalrymple shows us in this story how there is a conflict between opening up to spirituality and following religion rules. The Sufi mystic's commitment to bringing people of different faiths together acts as a protest against extremist ideas, making him a figure of peace in a religious world that is broken up. Dalrymple uses this character to show how different views are often accepted and included in Indian spiritual traditions, which helps build a sense of community that values differences.

4. The Baul Singer:

The Baul singer is part of a long line of travelling minstrels who don't follow

traditional faith and instead live a life full of freedom and spontaneity. Dalrymple's picture of the Baul shows how the singer is trying to break free from social constraints like caste and materialism. The Baul singer expresses a spirituality that values personal expression over following rituals through music and poetry. She lives by a mindset that values personal enlightenment over group conformity.

The way Dalrymple writes about the Baul culture shows how spiritual freedom can be used to criticise society. By not following traditional religious rules, the Baul singer claims his right to spiritual freedom and challenges the hierarchies of organised religion. This story makes you think about the balance between spiritual freedom and belonging to a group. It also shows how Baul philosophy can help people who want to go beyond the limits of society.

5. The Tantric Practitioner:

The story of the Tantric practitioner takes us into a world that is often wrapped in mystery and false beliefs. Dalrymple shows that tantra is more than just a set of rituals. It's a big idea that includes both holy and mundane things. Because he is dedicated to Tantra, the practitioner has to face social taboos and explore the limits of what is pure, what is death, and what is sexuality in ways that go against what most people think is right.

Dalrymple's portrayal of the Tantric practitioner shows how people who follow esoteric beliefs are looked down upon. The practitioner's pushed-to-the-edge status shows how uncomfortable society is with practices that are different from the norm. By using this story, Dalrymple explores ideas of power, change, and reclaiming one's identity. He stresses that Tantra offers a way for people to break free from social norms.

6. Making a Dalit idol:

The Dalit craftsman who makes the idols has a complicated relationship with his work. Although he makes idols for worship, he can't go into the temples where his work is respected because he is from a low caste. Dalrymple's description of the idol maker shows how religious practices are deeply rooted in caste discrimination. It shows how ironic it is that people worship statues but look down on the hands that make them.

This story shows how Dalrymple was interested in the contradictions in Indian faith, where devotion and social injustice live together. Dalrymple makes us think about how caste, art, and religion might interact by giving the idol maker a voice.

For me, the story is a strong critique of the way that social classes still affect faith practices in modern India.

7. The Buddhist Monk:

In the middle of modern life's stresses, the Buddhist monk's story is about his search for kindness and inner peace. Dalrymple's portrayal of the monk stresses how devoted he is to Buddhist ideals like non-attachment and mindfulness. This story goes into detail about the problems monks face when they try to live by spiritual values in a world that values money and things more and more.

Dalrymple shows through the Buddhist monk how faith can be a safe place to escape the stresses of everyday life and help people find inner peace. The monk's story shows how appealing Buddhism's inward focus is as an option to the modern world's focus on getting things from other people.

8. The Devadasi

People used to respect the Devadasi custom, but now it is looked down upon. Dalrymple's description of the Devadasi shows how strong she is in the face of being left out because she upholds a practice that has been both praised and criticised. This story shows how gender affects faith, showing how women who practise are often judged and taken advantage of.

Dalrymple's story shows how ideas about faith roles are changing, especially when it comes to women. The Devadasi's story makes us think about how gender, devotion, and social rank affect each other. It also shows how strong you have to be to keep your dignity when other people don't like you.

9. The Aghori Ascetic:

The story of the Aghori hermit shows a way of thinking that accepts death and goes against common sense. The Aghori's practices, like meditating in the middle of a crematorium, go against what most people think about death and cleanliness. Dalrymple's picture of the Aghori emphasises their search for transcendence through accepting that life is temporary.

In this last story, Dalrymple looks at how faith can change people by facing uncomfortable topics. Fearlessness is a big part of the Aghori mindset, and the journey of the Aghori shows how they see death as an important part of spiritual growth.

Major Themes in *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*

Tradition vs. Modernity

The conflict between tradition and modernity is one of the main ideas in *Nine Lives*. In a world that changes quickly, many of Dalrymple's subjects find it hard to keep up with their spiritual routines. For instance, the Theyyam dancer has to leave his village and perform in cities, where his holy dance is seen more as a form of entertainment than a religious ceremony. In the same way, the Jain nun struggles with modern India's materialism and shopping, which go against her vows of poverty and not being attached to anything. Dalrymple shows these struggles in a sympathetic way, showing how each person deals with modern life's demands while staying true to their values.

Modernity can sometimes make old ways of doing things go away for good. For example, conservative Muslim clerics are becoming more hostile towards the Sufi mystic because they see Sufism as an unconventional style of Islam. Dalrymple uses this story to show how traditional Islam is becoming more powerful in India, which is a big problem for the country's many different religions. Dalrymple shows how globalisation and modernisation change traditional spiritual practices by focussing on these differences. These changes often force practitioners to adapt or make concessions.

Spirituality

Dalrymple's subjects are very strong in their devotion to their spiritual ways, even though modern life can be hard on them. The nine stories in the book each show a different kind of dedication, and all of them have made big sacrifices to follow their chosen path. In her search for spiritual freedom, the Jain nun gives up all of her material belongings and even her family. This is similar to how the Baul singer lives a poor and lonely life, but he is steadfast in his belief that real wisdom can be found outside of organised faith. Dalrymple's characters go through poverty, being shunned by society, and even physical danger to follow their spiritual routes. This shows how powerful faith is in the human experience.

This persistence of spirituality is particularly striking given the economic challenges many of Dalrymple’s subjects face. For example, it's hard for the Theyyam dancer to make a living at his art, and it's terrible for the Dalit idol-maker to make money for his family. Dalrymple uses these stories to show how hard it is to pay for some spiritual practices in India, where the market economy often

undervalues or takes advantage of traditional forms of prayer. Even so, each person stays committed to their spiritual path, finding meaning and purpose in their faith even when things go wrong.

Religious Diversity

Nine Lives also looks at the different religious views and practices in India, as well as how Indian spirituality is a mix of different types of spirituality. People in Dalrymple's work come from many different religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and animistic beliefs. People have their own unique spiritual routines, which often combine parts of different religions. In this case, the Baul singer uses both Hindu and Muslim mysticism, and the Tantric practitioner uses both Hindu and Buddhist principles. Dalrymple sees this mixing of religions as a sign of India's religious history, which has always made room for a lot of different beliefs and practices.

On the other hand, Dalrymple says that religious fundamentalism and hatred are becoming a bigger threat to this variety of religions. For example, conservative Muslim clerics are against the Sufi mystic, and the Theyyam dancer is trying to keep his tribal customs alive in a society that is becoming more like itself. The author of these stories, Dalrymple, shows how India's diverse religious environment is in danger from modernisation, fundamentalism, and cultural commonality. Even with these problems, the people in "Nine Lives" continue to practise their own kinds of spirituality. They are a great example of how India's religious customs can be strong and flexible.

Resilience of Tradition

Dalrymple's story looks at how resilience is a trait that sets people who practise different kinds of faith apart. For example, the Theyyam dancer from Kerala follows a ritual that goes back hundreds of years and involves taking on the form of gods. They use their show as both a spiritual and a political statement. Modern pressures push Theyyam performers and their practice to the edges of society, but this dancer keeps doing it with devotion, showing how ancient practices can give people a sense of identity and purpose even when they face social and economic problems. Dalrymple's story shows that traditional practices are not just relics from the past, but are also real experiences that have meaning in modern life.

In the same way, the Jain lady in *Nine Lives* shows strength by her dedication to extreme asceticism. Her life, which was based on giving up everything and strictly

following nonviolence, shows how much discipline and personal loss are needed to stick to spiritual ideals in a society that often doesn't understand or doesn't take them seriously. The journey of this nun shows how Jainism's moral lessons are still relevant today and how strong its followers must be.

Dalrymple's stories show that resilience has many forms in the setting of traditional practices. It takes both the strength of will to follow spiritual principles and the flexibility to adjust these practices to a changing social environment. In each life story, we see how spiritual strength helps people keep their identity and honour even when things get hard. This connects ancient practice with modern life.

Unit IV - *An Area of Darkness* - V.S. Naipaul

Author note

V.S. Naipaul was a renowned author who was born in Trinidad in 1932 under the name Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul. He was renowned for his keen and incisive prose as well as his profound studies of cultural identities, colonialism, and the human condition. Over the course of his career, which spanned more than half a century and earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2001, Naipaul produced a great number of novels, essays, and travelogues that received widespread critical acclaim. His writing, which was frequently characterised by ideas that were devoid of feeling and a precision of language, probed deeply into the difficulties of national and postcolonial identities, particularly within the Caribbean, India, and Africa. After moving to England, where he attended Oxford University, Naipaul established himself as a descendant of indentured Indian immigrants who had settled in Trinidad. He is regarded as a towering presence in modern English literature, despite the fact that his beliefs occasionally aroused as much controversy as appreciation. His large body of work, which includes significant titles such as "A House for Mr Biswas" and "A Bend in the River," established him as a towering figure.

Introduction

An Area of Darkness by V.S. Naipaul is a captivating travel book that describes the author's journey to India, a place his family left long ago. In his writing, Naipaul explores complex themes like identity, society, and the feeling of belonging, raising important questions about what it means to be human. A key theme in the book is the quest for identity. Naipaul, who was born in Trinidad to Indian parents, struggles to connect with his ancestral roots. He faces the harsh realities of India, including

poverty, chaos, and spiritual decline, which lead him to question his own identity and his ties to the land. His reflections on India's rich cultural heritage alongside its significant social and economic challenges reveal the deep struggles within the country.

Naipaul's writing is remarkable because it blends personal experiences, historical context, and philosophical ideas. He discusses the conflicts between India's past and present, its spiritual and material aspirations, and its diverse ethnic identities. Through his critical perspective, Naipaul raises profound questions about who we are, where we belong, and the essence of our existence.Throughout the book, Naipaul's style is both poetic and assertive. He skillfully portrays the beauty and poverty of India, as well as its strength and suffering. His encounters with a variety of Indians—intellectuals, spiritual seekers, and everyday people—paint a rich picture of a society in transition. *An Area of Darkness* is a deeply personal and thought-provoking work that encourages readers to reflect on their own views about identity, society, and belonging. Naipaul's journey through India serves as a metaphor for the search for meaning and connection in a world that can often feel confusing and overwhelming

Unit IV - *An Area of Darkness* - V.S. Naipaul

Introduction

An Area of Darkness is a 1964 book by Indian author V.S Naipaulal, detailing his journey through India in the early sixties. The novel is considered a passionate but pessimistic work, conveying the author's sense of disillusionment upon his first visit to India in the 60s. The narrative is anecdotal and descriptive, often depicting distressing poverty, corruption, and cultural clashes. Naal's writing is known for its unflinching honesty and willingness to confront uncomfortable truths.

Although the book has been praised for its literary merit and insights into India's sociocultural landscape, it has also faced criticism for its controversial and sometimes negative portrayal of India. Naipaul's writing style, characterized by detailed descriptions and introspective tone, contributes to the overall impact of the narrative. Analyzing his use of language symbolism and narrative techniques can provide insights into the literary aspects of the work.

The novel has been criticized for its critical and at times negative portrayal of India. Analyzing the reasons behind Naipaul's criticisms can lead to discussions about the complexities of postcolonial identity, the challenges of development, and the tension between tradition and modernization. The historical context of India in

the 1960s can provide a deeper understanding of the societal and political challenges that influenced Naal's observations.

An Area of Darkness by Naipaul explores various themes, including the clash between traditional Indian culture and modernization, identity and alienation, and the impact of British colonialism on India. The novel delves into the social, cultural, and political landscape of India, highlighting poverty, inequality, and the struggle for modernization. Naipaul's experiences as an outsider in India contribute to the narrative's exploration of cultural identity and belonging.

The novel also delves into the lingering impact of British colonialism on India, examining how the colonial past has influenced the social, cultural, and political landscape of the country. It highlights the challenges faced by marginalized and economically disadvantaged segments of the population. The narrative reflects India's struggle to modernize and adapt to the changing global landscape, highlighting the complexities of postcolonial identity.

Naipaul critiques various institutions in India, such as the government, educational systems, and social structures, highlighting their shortcomings and complexities. He often uses vivid imagery to depict desolation and decay, contributing to the overall mood of the narrative. Critics argue that Naal's observations may lead to stereotyping and oversimplification, while others argue that his personal bias may cloud the objectivity of his analysis.

Unit IV - *An Area of Darkness* - V.S. Naipaul

Chapterwise Summary

Chapter 1

Initial Encounters: Naipaul's First Impressions of India

In the first chapter of *An Area of Darkness*, V.S. Naipaul starts his trip to India, a place his family left a long time ago. This chapter sets the tone for the whole book and presents some of the main ideas that Naipaul will talk about on his journey. The idea of character is a big part of Chapter 1. As Naipaul looks for links to his family's past, he feels a strong connection to India. However, he struggles with not knowing where he fits in this country. He has a complicated and somewhat idealized view of India because he grew up in Trinidad and was influenced by the West. He shows this inner struggle in the way he talks to the Indians he meets on the ship and in Bombay.

In a way, the ship connects Naipaul's familiar world to the strange land of India. While he is on board, he sees the Indian social structures and traditions, which both

interest and bother him. This place of transition is very important because it lets him watch from afar, away from the cultural rules of his Indian and Caribbean upbringing. Naipaul's views are marked by an outside, almost analytical point of view. He pays attention to the clothes, actions, and habits of the Indians he meets to show that he is different. This point of view is important because it shows Naipaul as someone who is trying to understand a place and people that are both familiar and strange to him. Naipaul has mixed views about India, but he really wants to connect with his roots there. Because of his own cultural displacement and the fact that Indian identity has many sides, this quest gets more complicated. Naipaul's trip isn't just about going back to where he came from; it's also about figuring out his different identities and cultural influence

Chapter 2

Reflections on Heritage and Identity in a New Land

The further V.S. Naipaul went on his trip through India, the more complicated his ideas about origin and identity became. Since Naipaul was born in Trinidad to an Indian family, India had always been a magical place in his mind, shaped by the stories and traditions that people in his diaspora community shared. But when he got to India, the place where his relatives had lived, he saw things that were very different from the stories he had heard as a child. Naipaul's trip to India wasn't just a trip to a different country; it was a pilgrimage to his ancestors' land. The trip was tainted by both high hopes and a deep desire to find out who he was. When they arrived in a place that was meant to feel like home but was surprisingly strange, it caused a deep internal conflict.

When he got to India, it was a shock to his senses and emotions. It was different from the romantic pictures he had in his head and from what he thought he would feel right away.Naipaul struggled with his sense of who he was more as he travelled and talked to different people. He was Indian, but he stood out because he wasn't like everyone else. He thought he would be able to easily connect culturally and emotionally with the locals, but he was often met with the harsh reality of being seen as a stranger, with different accents, habits, and attitudes that came from the Caribbean's very different colonial history.A big part of Naipaul's journey was this idea of being linked by blood but separated by experience. His effort to bridge this gap was made more difficult by the fact that his idealised view of India did not match up with how people actually lived there. It was hard to think straight because

of things like poverty, organisational chaos, and social values that were both strange and strangely familiar.

He felt torn between an emotional rejection of these unsettling aspects and a strong desire to embrace a place that was a big part of his family history.It wasn't just the outside world that they were fighting against either. Naipaul had to deal with the problem of what it means to fit in a place. Does a person's heritage alone determine where they fit, or does the experience of living and working with the place matter more? As he travelled through different parts of India, these questions became more important to him. Each new place added to his knowledge and sense of being alone.

Naipaul's trip through India turned into a lot more than just a tourist or geography trip; it turned into a deep dive into the meaning of national identity and belonging. Trying to connect with a place that was both familiar in some ways and strange in other ways created a unique problem that forms the core of Naipaul's story in *An Area of Darkness*. His writings show how hard it was for him to reconcile these different parts of his life. They show how painful it can be to realise that your background can feel far away while still having a big impact on who you are. In the second part of *An Area of Darkness*, V.S. Naipaul says some very harsh things about Indian culture. He painted a very realistic picture of a circus in Bombay to show how fake and shallow modern Indian society is.

At first glance, the circus looks like a fun way to pass the time, but Naipaul cleverly shows what it really means. He sees Indian society as a fake copy of Western culture, and the circus is a metaphor for how fake Indian society is. The actors in their flashy clothes represent the Indian middle class, who want to escape their everyday lives through shows and fantasy.

Naipaul's powerful use of imagery shows how the clean, organised streets of Bombay are very different from the empty, manufactured world of the circus. This difference brings out the difference between the "real" India and the made-up world of the circus, which Naipaul sees as a reflection of India's larger cultural problems.

Naipaul's observations about the Indian middle class, like how much they love going to the circus, show how they want to escape reality and are not attached to traditional Indian values. The middle class is blamed by Naipaul for India's culture decline, which makes this criticism exceptionally harsh.

Naipaul asks important questions about how colonialism and modernisation have changed Indian culture and identity through his study of the circus. This chapter

makes a strong case against the fakeness and shallowness he thinks is common in Indian culture.

Chapter 3

Cultural Insights and Social Observations

In *An Area of Darkness*, V.S. Naipaul provides a keen and thoughtful examination of India's social and cultural scene, which is a major focus of his story. He looks at various aspects of society, emphasizing the lasting effects of the caste system, the widespread poverty, and the complex political situation that affects the everyday lives of people in India.Naipaul's take on the caste system is especially powerful. He shows it as a long-standing social order that resists change, creating divisions among people that lead to social inequality and a feeling of acceptance of one's situation. This often makes it hard for individuals to improve their lives and continues the cycle of discrimination.

He is surprised by how strong this system remains, even with modern influences, and how it affects almost every interaction and social structure in India.Moreover, the author addresses the harsh and widespread poverty he sees during his journeys. The existence of slums, beggars, and the ongoing fight for basic needs is evident in both cities and rural areas, contrasting sharply with the lives of the Westernized upper and middle classes. This economic gap is a recurring theme in Naipaul's work, raising questions about how effective post-colonial development efforts really are.Naipaul also portrays India's political scene as swinging between strong nationalism and chaotic governance. He criticizes what he views as political showmanship that often overlooks critical social issues like education and healthcare. He believes these failures hinder progress in addressing poverty and social reforms, making it harder for India to develop a unified national identity and move forward.

Chapter 4

Personal Anecdotes Intertwined with Historical Context

V.S. Naipaul's journey through India is filled with personal stories that connect to the rich history of the places he visits. He travels from the lively streets of Bombay to the peaceful, spiritual areas of Varanasi, each location showing different aspects of Indian society and its complicated history.

In Bombay, Naipaul shares his experiences in the busy markets, where a mix of products and people create a chaotic but vibrant atmosphere. This is very different from the serious and historical vibe he finds in Varanasi, where life and death rituals

happen regularly along the Ganges River. Here, he thinks about how history is always present, showing how today is linked to deep-rooted traditions and the ancient Hindu culture.

Naipaul also explores southern India, visiting historical places like the ruins of Vijayanagar in Karnataka. He describes these old stones as quiet reminders of India's magnificent history, contrasting sharply with the modern challenges and political issues faced today. To him, these ruins symbolize a once-great civilization that is now broken, reflecting his view of modern India.

Throughout his travels, the historical background is always part of Naipaul's story, helping him understand the social and cultural aspects of India better. For example, in Kerala, he looks into the effects of colonialism and the complex caste system, showing how they shape today's political scene. He points out the strange mix of old traditions and new ambitions in India, where they often clash but also find a way to exist together in a lively and ever-changing environment.

Naipaul uses this mix of stories to try to connect the India he dreamed of with the real India he sees. It's a place full of history, but also buzzing with a chaotic and sometimes confusing present.

Chapter 5

Confronting Disillusionment:Reconciliation with Reality

As V.S. Naipaul went deeper into India, the romantic ideas he had long held about the land of his ancestors started to clash with the harsh realities he saw. As he tries to make sense of the difference between what India was meant to be and what it is, this disappointment becomes the main theme of his story.

Naipaul came to India with a lot of nostalgia and hopes based on stories from family and the idealised versions of India that are praised in literature. However, India was very different from what he had imagined. The chaos, poverty, and sluggish government work, along with the strong reminders of colonial abuse, took away the idealistic pictures he carried. These angry arguments set off a chain of events that made him rethink not only his relationship with India but also his own identity.

Naipaul shows this disappointment by writing about daily events and the way things work in the country. Naipaul uses the scenery of India as a background for his own inner story as he writes vividly about his travels through cities and villages. As he sees the differences between the classes, the corruption in the government, and

the complicated and sometimes upsetting social norms that go against what he thought he knew about the Indian way of life, his romantic view of the country falls apart.

This meeting made him put in a lot of mental and emotional work. Naipaul doesn't shy away from writing about how frustrated and disappointed he is. But this isn't just criticism from someone else's point of view; it's a highly personal, introspective struggle as he tries to understand and balance the chaotic parts of his heritage with his Western upbringing and values. During this chaos, his initial enchantment changes into a more sober and maybe even deeper knowledge of how complicated India is.

As Naipaul tries to make sense of these feelings and thoughts, he goes through a major and important change that affects both his mind and his life. What his title says about India as a "area of darkness" isn't really what he sees or says. Instead, he sees it as a scenery with many different types of lights and shadows. The trip changes his views and makes him realise how important it is to look at India not through the lens of memories but through the lens of actual events and the country's rich history. His change from being disappointed to understanding and accepting the truths he saw in India highlights important turning points in his own thoughts and in larger academic discussions about culture, history, and identity.

Chapter 6

In *An Area of Darkness*, V.S. Naipaul's trip through India comes to an end. His story gives us a reflective, somewhat unresolved look at his long travels. After all the people he meets, things he notices, and changes in his mood throughout the book, he comes to an introspective conclusion where he has both answers and questions about his family home.In Naipaul's story, there is a progression of understanding, from original disappointment to a more nuanced, though still critical, view. His many encounters with India's harsh realities of poverty, social stratification, and bureaucratic inertia have broken down the illusions that were built up through diasporic nostalgia and post-colonial literature portrayals. But they have also helped him understand more deeply the complicated things that make up modern India.

The author takes a close look at what it means to try to connect with a place that is both essentially yours and deeply foreign to you. This inner struggle stays strong in Naipaul's writing, giving his observations a strong feeling of personal crisis. During his travels, he carefully describes the sights and sounds of India, including

the busy cities, the quiet but harsh countryside, and the many people who are tied together by a compelling story of survival and custom.By summarising how his ideas have changed over time, Naipaul shows that he is content with being an outsider. He knows that his search for an answer may not be complete, just like India's social and political stories after it got its independence are not complete either. He leaves the reader with a deep sense of unfinished business, not only about his trip but also about how well he understands and accepts the historical and cultural forces that shape the subcontinent.

In his last thoughts, Naipaul combines his own journey with a larger existential question. He thinks deeply about what it means to be uprooted and the never-ending search for identity and belonging. This ongoing journey, with all of its mental and emotional ups and downs, not only shows one person's story, but also shows the bigger challenge of diaspora: the fight to find a place in a cultural space that isn't where you belong.

An Area of Darkness ends with a strong, though not definitive, thought on identity, heritage, and understanding. People may not find neat endings or comforting resolutions in Naipaul's work, but his closing thoughts make you think about how travel is a way to face and change how you see the world and yourself.

Critical Analysis

An Area of Darkness by V.S. Naipaul explores the deep and complicated themes of who we are, how we fit into society, and what it means to belong. Naipaul skillfully unravels the complex layers of Indian culture and identity using various literary techniques like metaphor, symbolism, sarcasm, satire, and vivid imagery. The journey of self-discovery and the search for community are key themes throughout the book. Naipaul's personal experiences serve as a powerful metaphor for the universal desire to find a place where we belong and to understand ourselves better.

As he navigates his own path, he dives into the rich and often confusing cultural landscape of India. His use of symbols and visual details adds depth to the narrative, pulling readers into the story with sensory descriptions of people and places. Through his clever use of irony and critique, Naipaul highlights the contradictions and oddities present in Indian society. He offers a sharp critique of the superficiality and hypocrisy that often come with social and cultural changes, particularly targeting the cultural elite and the Indian middle class.

By reflecting on his own identity and connection to India, Naipaul adds a personal touch to the narrative. His exploration of Indian identity encourages readers to think about their own sense of self and their relationship with their country, making his quest for a unified national identity a powerful symbol of India's broader identity struggles. *An Area of Darkness* effectively examines the complexities of human nature through the lenses of culture, belonging, and identity, inviting readers to think deeply about the intricate nature of Indian society.

Naipaul's novel *Area of Darkness* has been criticized for its perceived negative bias towards India, which critics argue is due to the author's disproportionate focus on the country's challenges and shortcomings. The outsider perspective, while providing a unique lens, has been criticized for potentially lacking a deep understanding of Indian culture and society.

Critics argue that Naipaul's focus on specific aspects like poverty and Decay may not adequately capture the diversity and complexity of the country, leading to an incomplete and skewed picture. Naal has also been criticized for making controversial generalizations about India and its people, which can perpetuate stereotypes and fail to acknowledge the diverse experiences and perspectives within the nation. The emotional subjectivity of Naipaul's narrative has been noted as both a strength and a weakness, but critics argue that it may cloud the objectivity of the analysis, leading to a more subjective and potentially biased portrayal. The novel's impact is intertwined with discussions about cultural representation, postcolonial identity, and the challenges of capturing the essence of a nation in transition.

An Area of Darkness explores various aspects of India, including religious diversity, cast and social hierarchies, rural life, agriculture, language and linguistic diversity, political landscape, globalization, and personal relationships. Naal explores the complexities of religious identities, cast and social hierarchies, rural life, agriculture, language and linguistic diversity, and the role of language in shaping cultural identities. He also examines the political landscape of India, focusing on the challenges faced by the newly independent nation in establishing governance and addressing sociopolitical issues.

The novel also explores the legacy of independence and the struggles of a nation finding its identity postcolonial era. Naal's narrative is organized thematically, exploring topics such as poverty, religion, and the clash between tradition and modernity. He uses descriptive imagery, autobiographical elements, critical analysis,

and symbolism to convey deeper meanings.

Thematic exploration is a key feature of the novel, with Naipaul employing descriptive imagery, autobiographical elements, and symbolism to convey deeper meanings. The narrative tone is often introspective and contemplative, reflecting on the author's own perspective and the broader implications of his observations. The book is situated within a specific historical context, reflecting on India's postcolonial era, and employs irony to highlight contradictions and congruities. *An Area of Darkness* is a multi-dimensional exploration of India's complexities and complexities.

Unit V

The following essays from Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing.

“Travelling to Write” - Peter Hulme

“Travel Writing and Gender” - Susan Basnett

“Travel Writing and Ethnography” - Joan Pau Rubes

Unit V - Travelling to Write - Peter Hulme

Short Summary

In 1933, Patrick Leigh Fermor embarked on a journey from Rotterdam to Constantinople, a region soon to face fascism and war. After his military service, he became a travel writer, chronicling his pre-war expedition in his works "A Time of Gifts" and "Between the Woods and the Waters."

Post War Voices

Fermor's 1950 book "The Traveller's Tree" marked a return to travel writing after the 1940s, showcasing the ability of English gentlemen to travel and write with wit and ease. Other notable contemporaries, such as Wilfred Thesiger, Eric Newby, and Norman Lewis, contributed to the enduring popularity of travel literature throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. Thesiger's works, such as "Arabian Sands" and "The Marsh Arabs," celebrate the ancient spirit of Arabs and critique materialism. Eric Newby's "A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush" contrasts Thesiger's genuine explorer approach with a modern, comfort-seeking traveler. Norman Lewis's "A Dragon Apparent" and "Golden Earth" reflect his extensive travels.

New Forms

V.S. Naipaul mentored Paul Theroux, a key figure in the late 1970s revival of travel writing. Theroux's works, such as "The Great Railway Bazaar" and "The Old Patagonian Express," combined American travel with European sophistication. Peter Matthiessen's "The Snow Leopard" in 1978 infused spirituality and introspection into travel writing, emphasizing the connection between physical travel and inner renewal. Bruce Chatwin's "In Patagonia" and Robyn Davidson's "Tracks" were debut works, reflecting feminist and anti-racist perspectives. These authors' journeys in challenging environments emphasized their commitment to understanding indigenous cultures. The literary magazine Granta revived interest in travel writing in the 1980s, connecting it with investigative journalism and political issues.

The State of Play

Contemporary travel writing has evolved into five strands: comic, analytical, wilderness, spiritual, and experimental. The comic aspect has gained popularity, with works like "Crudities" and "Notes from a Small Island" showcasing parody. The analytical strand remains relevant, especially in the context of socio-political changes like the collapse of communism. The wilderness strand highlights the allure of remote locations, exploring ecological themes alongside indigenous cultures. The spiritual dimension has gained prominence, with authors like Matthiessen and Davidson emphasizing inner journeys and personal renewal.

The experimental strand pushes the boundaries of the genre, blending various elements and challenging traditional categorizations. Writers like Colin Thubron and Jonathan Raban exemplify this trend, revealing the complexities of travel and personal experience. The text illustrates the dynamic nature of travel writing, highlighting its capacity to adapt and reflect the changing world while maintaining a rich tapestry of personal and cultural exploration.

Unit V - Travelling to Write - Peter Hulme

Detailed Summary

In December 1933, Patrick Leigh Fermor embarked on a significant journey from Rotterdam to Constantinople, traversing regions of Europe that would soon face the ravages of fascism and war. Following his distinguished military service in Crete, Fermor transitioned into a career as a travel writer, ultimately chronicling his pre-war expedition in his works "A Time of Gifts" and "Between the Woods and the

Waters." His extensive knowledge and literary style align him with the 1930s tradition exemplified by Robert Byron and Peter Fleming.

Although "A Time of Gifts" was not published until 1977, its release coincided with a wave of literature from younger authors such as Paul Theroux, Peter Matthiessen, Bruce Chatwin, and Robyn Davidson. This period marked a pivotal transformation in modern travel writing, indicating a shift in narrative style and thematic focus that would be explored further in the subsequent analysis.

Post War Voices:

Fermor's first travel book, "The Traveller's Tree," published in 1950, marked a significant return to travel writing after the tumultuous 1940s. It won the Heinemann Foundation Prize for Literature and established a continuity with pre-war writers, showcasing the ability of English gentlemen to travel and write with a sense of wit and ease. Other notable contemporaries of Fermor, such as Wilfred Thesiger, Eric Newby, and Norman Lewis, also contributed to the enduring popularity of travel literature throughout the latter half of the twentieth century.

Thesiger's works, particularly "Arabian Sands" and "The Marsh Arabs," reflect his deep engagement with the cultures of Arabia and Iraq, providing valuable ethnographic insights. His writing celebrates the ancient spirit of the Arabs and critiques materialism, although his themes may appear outdated. The fascination with nomadic life persists in later travel writing, as seen in works by Geoffrey Moorhouse, Bruce Chatwin, and Robyn Davidson.

Eric Newby's "A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush" features a brief encounter with Thesiger, contrasting their approaches to travel. Thesiger is portrayed as a genuine explorer, while Newby embodies a more modern, comfort-seeking traveler. This juxtaposition highlights the evolving significance of amateurism in travel writing during the twentieth century.

Norman Lewis emerges as a key figure in post-war travel writing, characterized by his broad political interests and a commitment to reporting on lesser-known regions of the world. His notable works include "A Dragon Apparent" and "Golden Earth," which reflect his extensive travels across Asia and beyond.

The post-war era saw travel writing become a viable literary career, influenced by the need for engagement with social and political issues. V.S. Naipaul's "The Middle Passage" exemplifies this shift, as he navigates the complexities of post-colonial identity and heritage while addressing the contentious nature of his subject matter.

While women travel writers existed in the early twentieth century, the post-war tradition remained predominantly male until the 1970s. Dervla Murphy stands out as a significant female figure, embarking on her first journey from Ireland to India by bicycle in 1962. Her works, including "Muddling Through in Madagascar," reflect a blend of self-deprecation and unique maternal concerns, contributing to the broader narrative of travel writing during this period.

New Forms

V.S. Naipaul served as a mentor to Paul Theroux, a significant figure in the resurgence of travel writing during the late 1970s. Theroux's innovative approach combined the ruggedness of American travel with the literary sophistication of European writers. His early works, "The Great Railway Bazaar" and "The Old Patagonian Express," utilized train travel to explore remote regions, establishing a respectable mode of travel that resonated with readers. Although Theroux revitalized the genre, he did not fundamentally reformulate it, as evidenced by contemporaneous works that marked more significant turning points.

Peter Matthiessen, an established traveler and writer, gained acclaim with "The Snow Leopard," published in 1978. This book, structured as a quest alongside zoologist George Schaller, infused spirituality and introspection into travel writing. Matthiessen's journey became a metaphor for personal exploration, emphasizing the connection between physical travel and inner renewal. The journal format and present tense narrative created an immediacy that engaged readers in his experiences and reflections.

In contrast, Bruce Chatwin's "In Patagonia" and Robyn Davidson's "Tracks" were debut works by relatively unknown authors. Chatwin's narrative, which revolves around a quest for a piece of mylodon skin, employs a modernist style that contrasts with Matthiessen's earnestness. Davidson's "Tracks," while less formally innovative, is notable for its depiction of a challenging expedition across Australia, reflecting feminist and anti-racist perspectives. Both works, despite their differences, contributed significantly to contemporary travel writing.

The three authors' journeys took place in challenging environments, highlighting their serious intentions. Matthiessen's exploration in the Himalayas, Davidson's trek through the Australian desert, and Chatwin's travels in Patagonia all reveal a commitment to understanding indigenous cultures and their ways of life. This ethnographic dimension aligns with Claude Lévi-Strauss's reflections on the

relationship between anthropology and travel writing, as seen in Matthiessen's earlier works and Chatwin's later engagements with indigenous populations.

The literary magazine Granta played a pivotal role in reviving interest in travel writing during the 1980s, connecting the genre with investigative journalism and contemporary political issues. This period also witnessed the emergence of counter-travel writing, exemplified by Jamaica Kincaid and Caryl Phillips, who critiqued the tourist industry and European racism, respectively. Collectively, these developments illustrate the evolving landscape of travel writing, marked by a blend of personal exploration, cultural awareness, and social critique.

The State of Play

There are five significant and overlapping strands in contemporary travel writing over the past twenty-five years: the comic, the analytical, the wilderness, the spiritual, and the experimental. The comic aspect has been particularly popular, with notable works ranging from Thomas Coryate's "Crudities" to Bill Bryson's "Notes from a Small Island." This tradition has evolved to include parody, as seen in Tony Hawks's "Round Ireland with a Fridge."

The analytical strand remains relevant, especially in the context of socio-political changes, such as the collapse of communism, which opened new avenues for exploration in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Works like Norman Lewis's "The Missionaries" exemplify the urgency and political engagement that characterize this type of travel writing. Similarly, Scott Malcolmson's "Tuturani" and Rebecca Solnit's "Savage Dreams" reflect a keen observation of political landscapes intertwined with personal narratives.

The wilderness strand highlights the enduring allure of remote locations, with contemporary writers exploring ecological themes alongside indigenous cultures. The search for 'lost tribes' in places like the Amazon and Papua New Guinea continues to captivate travel writers, while the concept of wilderness has expanded to include regions like Siberia and Alaska, often focusing on the interplay between physical challenges and spiritual journeys.

The spiritual dimension of travel writing has gained prominence, with authors like Matthiessen and Davidson emphasizing the inner journey and personal renewal. This aspect often merges with memoir, as seen in Rob Nixon's reflections on South Africa and Amitav Ghosh's historical narratives.

Finally, the experimental strand pushes the boundaries of the genre, blending various elements and challenging traditional categorizations. Writers like Colin Thubron and Jonathan Raban exemplify this trend, with Thubron's explorations of political upheaval in Asia and Raban's introspective journey to Alaska revealing the complexities of travel and personal experience. Raban's narrative, in particular, intertwines personal loss with the broader themes of travel, showcasing the emotional depth that can emerge from such journeys.

The text illustrates the dynamic nature of travel writing, highlighting its capacity to adapt and reflect the changing world while maintaining a rich tapestry of personal and cultural exploration.

Unit V - Travel Writing and Gender - Susan Bassnett

Short Summary

Adventure in travel has traditionally been written by men, with European sagas featuring knightly questing and seafaring exploration. However, in the twentieth century, both male and female travelers have written self-reflexive texts that defy easy categorization. British travel writing has a tendency to self-deprecation and irony, with writers like Henry Fielding and Jane Austen as antecedents. Contemporary writers like Redmond O'Hanlon and Eric Newby subvert or satirise the image of the explorer-hero, turning themselves into anti-heroes.

Rediscovering Women Travellers

The feminist revival of the early 1970s aimed to rediscover male-authored history, particularly an interest in women travelers. By the 1970s, some nineteenth-century women's travel accounts had reached a substantial reading public, and twentieth-century travelers like Rosita Forbes, Freya Stark, Gertrude Bell, and Rebecca West had a strong following. However, by the 1970s, their work was out of print and respect for their achievements had declined. The first stages of the revival were to make available works that had all but disappeared and to remind readers of the number of women travelers who had written about their journeys.

Women travelers are often categorized as doubly different from other, more orthodox, socially conformist women, and from male travelers who use the journey as a means of discovering more about their own masculinity. Jane Robinson published Wayward Women in 1990, and Sara Mills' Discourses of Difference highlights the stress that women lay on the personal and relationships in general.

Postcolonial perspectives have made these questions more complex, raising issues about the role and status of white women travelers in the age of imperialism. The nineteenth-century travel texts by men tend towards a greater scientificity, while much of the women's writing reflects an interest in philanthropic activities, characteristic of early feminism.

Diversity of Women's travel Accounts

Cheryl McEwan's study on Victorian women travelers in East Africa reveals a complex and multifaceted nature of women's travel writing. She argues that not all women travelers were middle-class or shared the same ideological standpoint, and those under the British Empire unconsciously collided with the colonial enterprise. Feminist thinking has evolved over the past thirty years, acknowledging patterns of diversity reflecting broader social and cultural differences. However, setting a benchmark for measuring women's achievements remains a challenge, with writers exploiting novelty and others reticent.

Documenting the Everyday

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a woman traveler, was met with contempt when she traveled to Constantinople in 1716 to join her husband, who had been appointed ambassador to Turkey. Her Letters, written after her return to England and published after her death in 1762, reveal the lively, forthright voice of a woman who described herself as a traveller and experimented with smallpox vaccination. Montagu's Letters challenge the tendency of European travelers to exoticise the Orient, as George Sandys's 1652 account of his travels in the Turkish Empire and Monsieur de Thevenot's Relation d'un voyage fait au Levant (1665) describe the laziness of oriental women. Lucie Duff Gordon's Letters from Egypt (1865) contested the fantasizing of her male contemporaries, while Lady Elizabeth Eastlake's Letters from the Shores of the Baltic (1842) provides detailed social documentation of her journey to visit her sister, married to a local aristocrat, in Reval, now Tallinn, Estonia.

Searching for a Role

The history of travel writing is closely linked to the history of mapping and surveying, as well as the natural world. As Europe acquired colonies, maps establishing the precise boundaries between disputed claims became vital. Women travelers had to write about their experiences from within a tradition that denied them a role. They traveled in various roles, such as wives, sisters, daughters of missionaries, diplomats, scientists, naturalists, explorers, individuals in search of the

unexpected, or leisure or instruction.

The discursive presence of women travelers in their texts raises questions about their intellectual insecurity caused by their marginalization in the newly developing field of anthropology. The excessive use of footnotes by writers such as Burton raises the issue of the function of the footnote, particularly in Orientalist texts where they use footnotes for comments on sexual practices often bordering on the pornographic in their detail.

The text explores the writings of women travelers in the nineteenth century, focusing on the differences between men and women. Male writers often had publication in mind from the outset, reflecting the social differences between men and women. Isabella Bird's books show the gradual process whereby a writer moved from amateur to professional writer status. Mrs. Alec-Tweedie (Ethel Brilliana) was another type of woman travel writer who wrote for the growing tourist public at the turn of the nineteenth century, providing chatty accounts of journeys all over the world.

Inventing an Identity

Studies of women travelers often highlight the difference between their lives at home and on the road, presenting them as breaking free from societal constraints. Women like Isabella Bird, Mary Kingsley, and Lady Hester Stanhope have experienced hardships during their travels, often redefining themselves and becoming someone who did not exist at home. Sara Mills questions how feminists interpret women's travel writing, suggesting that some may be seen as 'proto-feminists' or precursors. Many women travelers create self-conscious fictions, redefining themselves as characters in their narratives. This approach highlights the importance of authenticity in women's travel writing.

Fictionalising Process

In the 20th century, the use of dialogue in travel narratives has blurred the line between travel account and fiction. Rosita Forbes, a successful but now forgotten travel writer, exemplifies this tension between objective accounts and self-dramatization. Forbes, renamed 'Rosita', became a popular travel writer during the inter-war years, focusing on the Libyan desert as a place of mystery, sensuality, and freedom. As the popularity of desert books declined, Forbes turned to the glamorous gypsy myth, publishing her autobiography, Gypsy in the Sun, in 1944. Forbes's image contrasts with that of her contemporaries, Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark, who

were fascinated with the Arab world. Gertrude Bell, the first woman to obtain a first-class degree in history from Oxford, was a prominent figure in Middle Eastern politics. Stark, on the other hand, was more prolific, known for her scholarly knowledge, keen eye for detail, empathy, and beautiful, descriptive prose.

Journey to Self Awarness

Rosita Forbes, a renowned travel writer, has won awards and was elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society. She is different from her contemporary, Swiss Ella Maillart, who focuses on physical strength and emotionless writing. Women's travel writing in the late twentieth century focuses on the relationship between the individual and societies through which they travel. Writers like Dervla Murphy, Gertrude Bell, and Freya Stark have written about ecological questions, world poverty, and the future of the planet. Sara Wheeler's Terra Incognita: Travels in Antarctica (1997) represents another strand of women's travel writing that has grown in importance in the twentieth century.

Women's travel writing has grown in importance in the twentieth century, focusing on the journey that leads to greater self-awareness and takes the reader simultaneously on that journey. Sara Wheeler's book goes a step further, recounting a journey not only in terms of time and place but also in terms of gender relations. She balances social comment with lyrical description and an awareness of the history of expeditions to the places through which she travels.

Jan Morris, the greatest woman travel writer of the twentieth century, challenges the idea of binary oppositions between home and other, present and past, masculine and feminine. She focuses on the spirit, the feel of a place, and the relationship between the travel writer as an individual and the space in which she moves.

Conclusion

In the nineteenth century, male travel writers sexualized various regions of the globe, contrasting masculine northern regions with the softer, eroticized, feminine Orient. Women travel writers often asserted femininity through details of clothing, domestic life, or romantic episodes, reflecting the difficulties women faced in the age of empire. Travel writing is a product of a particular time and culture, with women travelers of the eighteenth century considered exceptional and the restlessness of women like Ella Maillart and Gertrude Bell in the twentieth century reflecting the struggle of modernist women.

The diversity of women's travel writing resists simple categorization, with patterns ranging from epistolary accounts to books targeted at specific readerships and blurring lines between autobiographical, anecdotal, and ethnographic. As travel writing has increased in popularity, distinctive sub-genres have emerged, such as all-action, heroic figures, ironic texts, scholarly detail, superficial anecdotes, casual conversations, spiritual experiences, and self-questioning and lyricizing works.

Unit V - Travel Writing and Gender - Susan Bassnett

Detailed Summary

Adventure in travel has traditionally been written by men, who move more freely in the public sphere. European sagas of knightly questing and seafaring exploration often feature men as protagonists, with women often being the objects of desire or destination points. The idea of man as a heroic risk-taking traveler is central to the narratives of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, there are other types of narratives, some produced by women, such as ethnography and social commentary. In the twentieth century, both male and female travelers have written self-reflexive texts that defy easy categorization as autobiography, memoir, or travel account. British travel writing has a tendency to self-deprecation and irony, with writers like Henry Fielding and Jane Austen as antecedents. Contemporary writers like Redmond O'Hanlon and Eric Newby subvert or satirise the image of the explorer-hero, turning themselves into anti-heroes.

Rediscovering Women Travellers

The feminist revival of the early 1970s aimed to rediscover what was perceived as male-authored history, particularly an interest in women travelers. By the 1970s, some nineteenth-century women's travel accounts had reached a substantial reading public, and twentieth-century travellers such as Rosita Forbes, Freya Stark, Gertrude Bell, and Rebecca West had a strong following. However, by the 1970s, their work was out of print and respect for their achievements had declined. In Paul Fussell's study of travel writing, Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars (1980), women are non-existent.

The first stages of the revival were to make available works that had all but disappeared and to remind readers of the number of women travelers who had written about their journeys. The UK feminist publishing house, Virago, reprinted classic travel books by women such as Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley, while a number of anthologies and studies of Victorian women travellers began to appear.

Some of these studies reflect a particular way of looking at women travellers, hinting that they are slightly eccentric and introduce a comic note that can easily be interpreted as mocking.

Women travellers are therefore categorised as doubly different: they differ from other, more orthodox, socially conformist women, and from male travellers who use the journey as a means of discovering more about their own masculinity. The underlying impression gained from these volumes is that the woman traveller was somehow in flight from something, seeking to escape from the constraints of her family or society. Jane Robinson published Wayward Women in 1990, which provides useful bibliographical information and short, potted biographies of women travellers. She also edited an anthology of extracts from travel writing by women, Unsuitable for Ladies, where she endeavours to distinguish how women wrote as opposed to their male counterparts by stressing differences of style and epistemology.

Sara Mills' pioneering study of women's travel writing and colonialism, Discourses of Difference, similarly notes the stress that women lay on the personal and relationships in general. Both emphasize the wealth of detail in women's travel accounts, along with a tendency to write about relationships, and both contrast this with the more public discourse of male travellers.

These questions continue to preoccupy feminist scholars and have been made more complex by postcolonial perspectives, which raise issues about the role and status of white women travellers in the age of imperialism. A text like May French-Sheldon's Sultan to Sultan. Adventures Among the Masai and Other Tribes of East Africa (1892) demonstrates the contradictions inherent in some of the books produced by nineteenth-century travellers, both male and female. On the one hand, they moved secure in the knowledge of their own superiority, quick to patronize or mock, yet on the other hand, they were ready to bear witness to what they saw as exploitation and cruelty by fellow Europeans and North Americans.

It is debatable whether this tendency is more marked in women's travel writing than in texts by men. On balance, the nineteenth-century travel texts by men tend towards a greater scientificity, while much of the women's writing reflects an interest in philanthropic activities, characteristic of early feminism. The extent to which women campaigned actively against twin murder reflects the kind of activism that motivated many European and US female reformers to denounce slavery,

exploitative working conditions for women, and children, and human rights abuses generally.

Diversity of Women's travel Accounts

Cheryl McEwan's study of Victorian women travellers in East Africa explores the diversity of women travelers and their writing styles. She argues that women's travel writing is more complex than previously suggested and that it is essential to recognize diversity. McEwan highlights that not all women travelers were middle-class or shared the same ideological standpoint, but those who travelled under the British Empire were unconsciously colluding with the colonial enterprise.

Feminist thinking has evolved over the past thirty years, from conceptualizing women as a single category to acknowledging patterns of diversity reflecting broader social and cultural differences. One consistent line through discussions of women travellers is the notion that they were somehow exceptional, which has been a classic way of marginalizing women's achievements. However, the problem lies in setting a benchmark against which women can be measured. Writers like French-Sheldon exploited the novelty value of the idea of a woman traveller, while others, like Mary Kingsley, were more reticent. Isabella Bird, for example, was concerned about public opinion and credibility with the male-only Royal Geographic Society.

Documenting the Everyday

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a woman traveller, was met with contempt when she traveled to Constantinople in 1716 to join her husband, who had been appointed ambassador to Turkey. Her Letters, written after her return to England and published after her death in 1762, reveal the lively, forthright voice of a woman who described herself as 'a traveller' and who experimented with smallpox vaccination by allowing her children to be immunised in Turkey. However, her Letters challenge the tendency of many European travelers to exoticise the Orient. George Sandys's 1652 account of his travels in the Turkish Empire and Monsieur de Thevenot's Relation d'un voyage fait au Levant (1665) are typical of texts that describe the laziness of oriental women and their supposedly 'natural' tendency to lasciviousness. Montagu gives a very different account of Turkish women in the bath-house and wittily criticizes the stupidity of those writers whose erotic fantasies have led them to distort the more domesticated reality that she finds operating in a community of women. A century later, Lucie Duff Gordon's Letters from Egypt (1865) contested the fantasising of her male contemporaries. Both these aristocratic women travellers

wrote about the experiences of the women they encountered, refuting the growing tendency towards eroticisation of the unfamiliar that characterises so many texts by male travelers.

Some works by women travellers provide serious, detailed social documentation. Lady Elizabeth Eastlake's Letters from the Shores of the Baltic, published in 1842, is another example of the epistolary form popular among women writers especially. Eastlake uses the format of twenty-five letters to give an account of a journey to visit her sister, married to a local aristocrat and living in Reval, now known as Tallinn in Estonia. She provides detailed descriptions of diet, childcare, the education of girls in imperial Russia, and even has a chapter about a smuggling expedition. Although there is a strong authorial presence in this text, there is no desire to reinvent herself as someone else and certainly no desire to see travel as a means of escape from the reality of home.

Searching for a Role

The history of travel writing is closely connected to the history of mapping and surveying, as well as the natural world. As Europe acquired colonies, maps establishing the precise boundaries between disputed claims became vital. The early history of colonialism was one where new territories were metaphorised as female, virgin lands waiting to be penetrated, ploughed, and husbanded by male explorers. The overt sexualisation of the language of territorial expansion quickly became commonplace, leading to women travelers having to write about their experiences from within a tradition that denied them a role.

Women did travel in various roles, such as wives, sisters, daughters of missionaries, diplomats, scientists, naturalists, explorers, individuals in search of the unexpected, or leisure or instruction. They chose to write about their experiences in full knowledge of the absence of a tradition into which they could insert themselves with any degree of comfort or familiarity. This breaking-through can be discerned in the clarity of some of the voices that speak from women's texts and the strong emphasis on the personal.

The discursive presence of women travellers in their texts raises questions about their intellectual insecurity caused by their marginalization in the newly developing field of anthropology. The excessive use of footnotes by writers such as Burton raises the issue of the function of the footnote, particularly in Orientalist texts, where

they use footnotes for comments on sexual practices often bordering on the pornographic in their detail.

The text explores the writings of women travelers in the nineteenth century, focusing on the differences between men and women. Male writers often had publication in mind from the outset, reflecting the social differences between men and women. Some pieces of writing were written as monographs, while others were written in the form of letters, diaries, or sketches and assembled into book form. Isabella Bird's A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains is composed of seventeen letters to her sister, prefaced by a note that points out that the letters "as their style indicates, were written without the remotest idea of publication."

The diaries of Margaret Fountaine, published in 1980, are another example of a text written for private purposes but then made public. Fountaine traveled the world in pursuit of her hobby, butterfly-collecting, keeping a diary from the age of sixteen that recorded not only her travels but also her love affairs. Her diaries were locked in a trunk with a note forbidding anyone to read them until 15 April 1978, exactly 100 years from her first entry.

Isabella Bird's books show the gradual process whereby a writer moved from amateur to professional writer status. By the time she wrote her accounts of journeys to China, Japan, and Kurdistan, she had a definite reading public in mind. She became the first woman to address a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society in 1892 and was elected to a fellowship shortly afterwards. Her reputation as a serious traveller was one that she guarded jealously, furiously refuting suggestions that she might have dressed improperly in mannish clothing.

Mrs Alec-Tweedie (Ethel Brilliana) is another kind of woman travel writer who wrote for the growing tourist public at the turn of the nineteenth century, providing chatty accounts of journeys all over the world. One of her most interesting books is her account of a journey across Russia, Siberia, and China, undertaken in the early 1920s when the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1917 was at its height. She wrote a polemic against Bolshevism, combining descriptions of squalid hotels, inadequate public transport, uneatable food, and desperate poverty with rants about the hellishness of life in Russia and Siberia.

The text also provides insight into another problematic area of debate about women's travel writing: the relationship between narratives of travel and some of the women travellers' search for identity.

Inventing an Identity

Many studies of women travelers focus on the difference between their lives at home and life on the road. Women travellers are often presented as breaking free from the constraints of contemporary society, realizing their potential once outside the boundaries of a restrictive social order. This reading proposes that women who chafed at the constraints of domesticity could find escape through travel.

Isabella Bird, Mary Kingsley, Lady Hester Stanhope, and others have all experienced hardships during their travels, often redefining themselves and becoming someone who did not exist at home. Sara Mills questions this interpretation and questions how feminists read women's travel writing. She points out that some of these women may be seen as 'proto-feminists' or precursors, and that the texts can be read to provide examples of strong role models. However, she warns against rationalized readings in which assumptions are made that the texts are simply autobiographical.

Many of the works by women travellers are self-conscious fictions, with the persona emerging from the pages being as much a character as a woman in a novel. Isabella Bird, for example, stresses the hardships she endures during her travels, reinforcing the difference between Isabella the semi-invalid at home and Miss Bird the intrepid explorer who is able to endure hardships that other women cannot.

Isabella Bird's accounts of uncomfortable, dangerous situations run throughout her writings, with a tone of slightly ironic boastfulness established in her American book. She recounts how, in the company of her admirer, Rocky Mountain Jim, she narrowly missed death on a mountain path overhanging a precipice, transforming herself into a heroine capable of extraordinary physical feats.

Despite her eventual recognition by the Royal Geographical Society, Bird's writings show how carefully she invented a new persona for herself. Many travel writers, men and women, have reinvented themselves in similar ways, always claiming to be writing in a spirit of 'authenticity' yet fictionalising their experiences by writing themselves as a character into the account of their travels.

Fictionlising Process

In the twentieth century, there has been a shift in the construction of travel narratives, with the increasing use of dialogue in travel writing closing the gap between travel account and fiction. The protagonist engages in conversations that introduce a range of other characters into the narrative, and the reader is expected to

believe that such conversations are recorded rather than invented. Rosita Forbes, a highly successful but now forgotten travel writer, offers a clear example of this tension between claims to offer an objective account of her travels and relentless self-dramatization.

Forbes rechristened herself 'Rosita', abandoning her given name, the more banal 'Joan'. Her books and articles were extremely popular during the inter-war years, and she produced several colorfully titled accounts of her journeys. She established herself as a travel writer with The Secret of the Sahara: Kufara (1921), an account of a journey through the Libyan desert to the forbidden city of Kufara. Forbes struck a chord with readers increasingly fascinated with images of the desert as a place of mystery, sensuality, and freedom.

As the vogue for desert books waned, Forbes turned her attention to another popular myth, that of the glamorous gypsy, publishing the first volume of her autobiography, Gypsy in the Sun, in 1944. She cultivated her gypsy image by changing her name to the more exotic Rosita and devising a multi-cultural family history, claiming to be related to Royalist aristocrats and Peruvian dancers.

Forbes's image is marked in contrast to that of her contemporaries, Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark, who were fascinated with the Arab world. Gertrude Bell was the first woman to obtain a first-class degree in history from Oxford in 1888 and worked as an archaeologist, learning both Arabic and Persian. By the time of her death in 1926, she had acquired a reputation as a serious figure in Middle Eastern politics.

Freya Stark was a far more prolific writer than Gertrude Bell, and her books such as The Southern Gates of Arabia: A Journey in the Hadhramat (1934), Letters from Syria (1942), and Riding to the Tigris (1959) reflect a wealth of scholarly knowledge, combined with a keen eye for detail, a great deal of empathy, and an ability to write beautiful, often lyrical descriptive prose.

Journey to self-awarness

Rosita Forbes, a renowned travel writer, won awards for her work and was elected to a Fellowship of the Royal Geographical Society. She is a different kind of writer from her contemporary, Swiss Ella Maillart, whose books reflect both physical strength and an absence of sentimentality. Maillart produced a series of books, from an account of her travels in Russian Turkestan in 1934 to the much more spiritual The Land of the Sherpas (1955). Her best-known work is Forbidden Journey: From

Peking to Kashmir (1937), an account of her journey through the wastes of Chinese Turkestan with the English traveller, Peter Fleming.

Women's travel writing in the late twentieth century tends to focus more on the relationship between the individual and the societies through which she travels. Writers such as Dervla Murphy, Gertrude Bell, and Freya Stark have written about ecological questions, world poverty, and the future of the planet. Sara Wheeler's Terra Incognita: Travels in Antarctica (1997) represents another strand of women's travel writing that has grown in importance in the twentieth century: the journey that leads to greater self-awareness and takes the reader simultaneously on that journey.

Writers like Isabella Bird, Rosita Forbes, and Fanny Bullock have written epic works such as Algerian Memories: A Bicycle Tour over the Atlas to the Sahara (1895) and Through Town and Jungle: Fourteen Thousand Miles A-Wheel Among the Temples and People of the Indian Plain (1904). However, there is very little sense of them growing and developing over the years. The works of Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark, on the other hand, reflect personal, social, and political changes, so that the journeys they recount are both inner and outer journeys, towards greater self-awareness and greater knowledge gained through experience.

Sara Wheeler's book goes a stage further, recounting a journey not only in terms of time and place but also in terms of gender relations. She charts the months she spent as a writer in resistance on different bases in Antarctica, moving between bases staffed by scientists (mostly male) from different countries. In her account, Antarctica, with its history as the site on which men tested their endurance skills to the limit, offers a particular challenge to a woman. With great skill and elegance, Wheeler looks at how different groups stationed on Antarctica reflect the social attitudes of men towards women in different cultures today.

Wheeler's book balances social comment with lyrical description, combined with an awareness of the history of expeditions to the places through which she travels. It is a similar power to that found in probably the greatest woman travel writer of the twentieth century, Jan Morris. Morris does not use the journey as a pretext for reinventing herself or for writing autobiography. She acknowledges that Venice has altered as the world has changed and questions what role the city will have in the future.

Morris's writing challenges the idea of binary oppositions – between home and other, present and past, masculine and feminine. She focuses on the spirit, the feel of

a place, and the relationship between the travel writer as an individual and the space in which she moves.

Conclusion

In the nineteenth century, male travel writers produced accounts that sexualized various regions of the globe, contrasting masculine northern regions with the softer, eroticized, feminine Orient. However, this distinction is less apparent in women travel writers who often asserted femininity through details of clothing, domestic life, or romantic episodes. The ambiguous attitudes and complex self-representation in the works of Isabella Bird, May French-Sheldon, and Mrs. Alec-Tweedie mirror the difficulties for women in maneuvering between public and private spheres in the age of empire.

Travel writing is always a product of a particular time and culture. Women travelers of the eighteenth century were considered exceptional, reflecting social attitudes towards women's mobility and the need for them to reinvent themselves in a hierarchical society of unequal opportunity. The restlessness of women like Ella Maillart and Gertrude Bell in the more violent decades of the twentieth century mirrors the struggle of modernist women trying to find a way of realizing themselves in a changing world.

The sheer diversity of women's travel writing resists simple categorization. Patterns can be traced, with epistolary travel accounts giving way to books targeted at specific readerships and lines blurred between autobiographical, anecdotal, and ethnographic. The search for self-expression and the reformulation of identity are common elements in the work of many travelers, but processes of fictionalisation are also common in the work of many male travel writers.

As travel writing has increased in popularity, distinctive sub-genres have emerged, such as all-action, heroic figures, ironic texts, scholarly detail, superficial anecdotes, casual conversations, spiritual or mystical experiences, and self-questioning and lyricizing works. Sara Wheeler's books and Dervla Murphy's are rooted in everyday experience and offer down-to-earth portraits of how women deal with physical hardship and social conscience.

Travel writers today are producing texts for an age characterised by increasing interest in concepts of hybridity, where theories of race and ethnicity are starting to crumble under the pressure of millions in movement around the world. The role of

women in adjusting perspectives is immense, reflecting the demise of a dominant culture.

Unit V - Travel Writing and Ethnography- Joan Pau Rubes

Detailed Summary

The ethnographic Impulse

The description of peoples, their nature, customs, religion, forms of government, and language is deeply ingrained in travel writing in Europe after the sixteenth century. In England, this assumption was justified by the travel collections published from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The description of peoples became the foundation for a general rewriting of 'natural and moral history' within a new cosmography made possible by the navigations of the period. The concept of a'moral' history was defined in the sixteenth century by writers like Jose de Acosta, who focused on the moral element, 'varieties of men and humane affaires'. The description of peoples in their variety was highly valued in narratives of travel, both for the entertainment value and philosophical issues raised by the evidence for variety. The European ethnographic impulse was a product of a unique combination of colonial expansion and intellectual transformation. Both ethnography and ethnology were crucial to the Enlightenment project of a world-historical science of mankind. The desire for information, mainly practical purposes, led to the growth of the European genre of non-fictional travel writing throughout the Renaissance.

Ethnography and the genres of travel writing

There are many types of travel writing, and travelling is an important part of the writing process. Ethnography is important to some types, but not to others or not at all. For example, stories about Francis Drake's travels mostly focused on English attacks on Spanish colonies. At the same time, merchants kept diaries that talked about the places and people they met. The "description" of Java by Edmund Scott and the "relation" of Golconda by William Methwold are two early examples. Some educated observers, on the other hand, were more interested in the subject and based their reports on the work of antiquarian scholars in the seventeenth century. The "relation" was one of the most basic types of ethnography. It was used by writers from Iberia and Italy to describe the places and times they visited in Africa, America, and Asia.

Traveler's ethnography could be based on a relationship, like William Methwold's report of Golconda. Methwold separated his observations from his

travels and wrote about a country in a way that made sense based on where it was located. He starts by talking about the king, his faith, his habits, his enemies, his income, his castles, and his captains. This gives us an idea of how the king rules the whole country. Then he makes a distinction between the religion of the powerful class (Muslim) and that of the "gentiles or heathens" (Hindu), mentioning the idea of religious tolerance. The relationship then goes on to include information about marriage, sexual relations, children, birth, clothing, physical traits, and money. Methwold's story isn't very well organised, but it's a great example of the wide range of topics that a geographical "relation" was thought to cover. The idea of barbarians who were not civilised was important for the English colonisation of North America today. Humanist education was a key part of changing practical statements into more philosophical conversations. The growth of scientific ethnology was caused by a lot of intense and long-lasting contact between well-known and respected ethnographers.

Ethnography has been a big part of travel writing since the Middle Ages and is still important today. Pilgrims wrote the first travel stories, and they often made religious reflection the main centre of their stories. This approach showed a strong desire for empirical curiosity in European travel writing. In the seventeenth century, many educated gentleman writers turned pilgrimages to the Holy Sites into a "Grand Tour" of the East, often combining ethnography with antiquarianism. As missionaries became more important, some of the first ethnographies were written by men whose main goal was to convert non-Christians to Christianity. English Protestants helped with projects like Henry Lord's Display of Two Forraigne Sects in the East Indies that tried to change people or explain different religions. During the 1800s, missionary groups had the most significant effect on how the British Empire interacted with local people in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Some merchants and sailors wrote less detailed reports, but Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's Discours of Voyages into the East and West Indies gave a full picture of the Portuguese East in the 1580s.

British imperial projects, like Cook's journeys in the Pacific and the great Victorian expeditions to Africa, trained generations of explorers and surveyors with both science and commercial goals. But the quality of ethnographic study stayed uneven because of ideological arguments and the rise of scientific ethnology in the 1800s, which was based on evolutionary theories. Native people were often portrayed by naturalist science as carefree, noble savages or childish, sexually weak

American Indians, which made them hard for more experienced viewers to recognise.

Along with the active ideology of geographical finding, more and more negative and rigid racial stereotypes were formed. For instance, Alfred Russel Wallace's way of grouping things in The Malay Archipelago (1869) was very subjective. He came up with two made-up types, the "impassive Malay" and the "impulsive Papuan," which were grouped along geo-zoological lines.

Many travel writers from the nineteenth century made overtly imperialist assumptions. This is in contrast to how early modern diplomats often painted native courts in a more nuanced way. In general, there wasn't a sense of overwhelming European culture or racial superiority in their stories. Instead, the Muslim and non-Muslim civilisations in the East had very complex and often admirable systems of power. In contrast, the British Crown was looking for peaceful trade deals while being relatively weak.

A professional anthropologist, who became very important in the beginning of the nineteenth century, got a lot of their knowledge about other cultures from the work of naturalists, missionaries, and individual travellers over the previous three hundred years. Good ethnography required linguistic proficiency, years of close contact, and acceptance of a local power structure, sometimes without reference to theoretical complexity.

Ethnographic rhetoric and cultural translation

Anthropology has been used in travel writing for a long time. Its history shows how analytical categories have grown and changed over time, appearing in a variety of genres and languages with shifting focus and assumptions. Throughout history, some things have stayed the same: faith, marriage, women, sexuality, dress, language, literature, science, technology, other arts, and the way a country runs its economy. But big changes happened because of how people interpreted things and because new scientific ideas and ideological systems came into being. For instance, religious categories were emphasised in the early modern era, while racial ideas came into being in the middle of the nineteenth century. The idea of "barbarism" or "savagism" changed a lot because of Christian humanist nostalgia, antiquarian interest, criticisms of European civilisation, and ideas about the authority of the state.

It is important to know how the field of ethnography has changed over time in order to understand the connection between the unplanned ethnographies of uneducated observers and the complicated ideas of educated writers who are arguing

about moral, philosophical, or scientific issues. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, travel methods sprung up as a response to the new scientific focus that ruled humanist and post-Aristotelian dialectics. These methods were used on trips in both Europe and the colonies. They became one of the main concerns of the Royal Society from the beginning of its history until the great scientific voyages of the 18th century.

These methods didn't always change the way ethnographers talked, but they did make people want more order and accuracy. By putting the trip story into a scientific project, the scientists were able to get a lot of people to help them make a new universal encyclopaedia. But the fact that travellers might be too general when talking about other countries wasn't seen as a problem very often. People who were doing ethnography were free to use their own schooling, experience, and intelligence in their work.

Even though it's hard, there are examples of people trying to translate cultures by using analogies, using native sources for historical and archaeological study, or doing research that takes language into account. Roger Williams's A Key into the Language of America (1643) uses an ethnographic method that doesn't look at native culture from the outside as something to study. Instead, it shows evidence of conversation and dialogue, which lets Indian voices be heard.

The "native voice" is a unique thing that happens when an author who is not from Europe learns enough English to write their own journey story. This can be seen in the story of Olaudah Equiano or the book African by Gustavus Vassa. Dean Mahomet, a Bengali Muslim who worked for the East India Company and later lived in Britain, wrote a travelogue that is more European than Asian. The ethnographic style used by Mahomet is more European; it uses European writing conventions and British Orientalist research. His view is shaped by the army's society, which makes the traveler's identity complicated.

Ethnography and Politics

The political aspect of ethnography and ethnology in travel writing is essential to figuring out if it served as an instrument or a rationale for empire. Some evidence suggests that ethnography was used to support or defend imperialism. However, it is important to remember that many travel writers used ethnography for other reasons, like romanticising natives, lamenting what happened to them after Europeans came in contact with them, or emphasising how different cultural systems are.

The idea of the "noble savage" dominated philosophical conversation in the eighteenth century, especially when it came to stories about Pacific Islanders. Some French writers, like Montaigne, Rousseau, and Diderot, saw the savage as a natural man in a good light, but this was mostly for effect or speculation. There may be some truth to the idea that people want to keep their culture pure because they admire certain types of behaviour.

It's important not to boil down the study to a choice between European ethnography that thinks its culture is better and other "barbarians." In this way, too, pictures of educated people from outside of Europe are important. Anson's voyage showed the Chinese to be dishonest, weak, and corrupt, which started a bad trend in how Europeans felt about the Chinese. Montesquieu used Anson's journey as proof to develop his idea of oriental tyranny. He saw the Chinese as a type of arbitrary rule that was harsh and went against European ideas of political freedom, private property, and civil law.

Theologians, political scientists, and ethnologists used what travellers saw abroad in Europe, but it wasn't just a case of identity or manipulation. There was contact between the two groups. Travellers not only brought new knowledge to the table, but they also added to the ongoing discussions about politics outside of Europe.

Ethnography as Science

Travellers from Europe were crucial in the development of ethnography because they documented their experiences with different cultures and countries, which helped to create a fresh, scientifically based conversation about humans and the natural world. As part of its mission to promote natural knowledge, the Royal Society of London gives many examples of people who were interested in travel reports. It is important to note the difference between the "science" of ethnography used by merchants, navigators, missionaries, and colonial officials and the rise of scientific anthropology as an academic field.

A new history of man was created by spontaneous ethnographers like William Methwold, Roger Williams, and Robert Knox. Traveller-philosophers like Bernier and naturalists like Joseph Banks and Alexander von Humboldt, on the other hand, were interested in ideas. In the 1800s, romantic travellers and scientists like Thomas Raffles, Burton, and Wallace went beyond what Europe controlled to find the most remote examples of human and environmental diversity.

As ethnography grew as an academic field, the views of merchants and

gentleman travellers were thrown out as not being deep or important. This change is shown in Robert Louis Stevenson's 1896 book In the South Seas, where he stops writing about locals as "natural men" who are carelessly happy and starts writing about them as people who are falling apart forever.

After World War II, there was a new situation that had a big effect on the role of ethnography in trip writing. Cultural traditions are becoming less clear because of globalisation and the gradual loss of the anthropologist's privileged field. This means that the business needs to be redefined as a description of this blurring and extinction.