MAKING OF AN ANECDOTAL INDIA

A STUDY IN THE WRITINGS OF BRITISH WOMEN TRAVELLERS IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

A Dissertation submitted for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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JANUARY 2007

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This is to certify that I, Babitha Justin, have carried out the research embodied in the present dissertation titled 'Making of an Anecdotal India: A Study in the Writings of British Women Travellers in Independent India' for the full period of time prescribed under the PhD ordinances of the University of Hyderabad.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge that no part of this dissertation was earlier submitted for the award of research degree to any university.

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Acknowledgements

Initially I thought my topic of research was jinxed, because, after selecting this topic, I started criss-crossing India with a traveller's-inertia rooted deep inside me. Later, I realized that travelling was the best means to explore writings on travel. I felt like a chosen one till I actually started writing my dissertation. Writing down my stray analysis and confusions on theorizing had been a very difficult task for me. If not for those people who have helped me at every step, I could not have finished writing at all. I am really indebted to all those people who were involved directly or indirectly in helping me out with my thoughts…

Prof. Sachidananda Mohanty, for being the most non-interfering supervisor one can ever get; for inspiring me with his own examples, for being patient and encouraging, for being with me and my research as I passed through various stages of life, moods, roles, etc. Thank you for your invaluable guidance.

Prof. Uma Alladi, Head, Dept. of English, for being kind and supportive throughout

My doctoral committee members Prof. Mohan Ramanan (for introducing me to Sarah Lloyd and all troubles taken to go through my drafts) and Prof. Syed Mujeebuddin (for being kind, encouraging and helpful)

Prof. Sudhakar Marathe for his presence in the department

Prof. Narayana Chandran, for giving me a new lease of research life in the department under his headship

Dr. M. Sridhar, for his encouragement

Dr. Murali Manohar, for being nice and wishing me well all the time

Dr. Suneeta Rani, for keeping on encouraging me throughout

Dr. Afeefa Banu, for her warmth and well-wishes

Dr. Pramod Nayar, for all the helpful suggestions

Dr. Anna Kurien, for her cheer and timely advice

Dr. Hoshang Merchant, for his poems, that sustained me in Tura

The staff members - Mr. Nagarajan, for being a friend and support, Mr. Anand, Suresh garu … and
Ganesh, for lighting up the department with genuine joy, for all the SMS messages that pepped me up

The Staff members of Indira Gandhi Memorial library, HCU; The British Libraries Hyderabad, Thiruvananthapuram and New Delhi, the IACIS library and its staff members, the members of NEHU library, Tura.

My special thanks to the VC of NEHU, Prof. Promod Tandon, for granting me the study leave under special circumstances and the PVC, Prof. S.S. Khare, for his support. Special thanks to NEHU staff members Mr. George and Mr. Daniel.

My colleagues in NEHU, Dr. Sujata, Mr. Thakur, abhi Fame, Twinkle, Nikme, Jackey, Dokatchi, Ma'm Angela, Mr. Jaiswal, Dr. Madhusudan and others.... Robin, in Shillong campus, for friendship and poems… Deepok and Judah.

My students who kept me going; Sengchi, for being a friend and a wicked foe forever; Dinesh, for knowing me too well; Angam, for the creativity that stimulated my mind, Embellish, Asosoba, Lambok, Render … Thanks for all the precious moments of camaraderie and togetherness that you gave me…. All my students I have taught till now, for the warmth and love they have showered on me…Kyt, Palei and Christy, special thanks for being good friends and good students.

For Thirumal and Bindu, for offering me a place to stay, making me feel at home and giving me all the critical suggestions that pepped me. Bindu, especially, for her unstinting support and love (though she would claim that there is no innocence in love, LOL).

For Usha, Theo and Abhay, giving me a home away from home, making me comfortable when ever I needed it most. Munmun, for companionship….

Saswati and Prakash for offering my wanderlust a comfortable and furnished room and all the well wishes. Saswati, for all her nakhras, help and sincere love.

For Vinayan and Shaji, Dechu and Nandu…for friendship

Kevin and Geetam for the lovely music, wine-filled evenings, and trekking to the unknown … Titthue, Chandrajit and Phoebe for our late friendship.

For my friends Among, Aravind, Jes, Nilesh, Ravi, Rohit, Suresh, Naveen, Praveen, Sreenath, Sreenu, Manohar, Jitesh, Angie, Kishore and others, again for moments of companionship and sincere love…

Arvind and Jes, for treating like a member of their family. Suri, for the lovely music-filled evenings in Tarnaka

Smrti, for the interest she has shown in my work and the pains she took to proofread them. For pointing out the details I have missed and the loopholes too simultaneously. Thanks a million to Smrti for helping me out of my confusions.

Amit, for the brilliant proofing he has done to my dissertation. Shilpa, for her warmth…

For Christy, Sarita and Beena for the fun-filled, much-time-consuming chai breaks at gopes and for putting up with all my quirkiness and nakhras.

Christy, for being a kindred soul

Sarita, for the common interests and all the fun we had

Sukhi, for her concern and love.

For Jenny, Shalini, Sophie (NALSAR), Pallavi and Viji again for friendship…

For Beena, for all the formatting helps, tea-filled evenings and swimming breaks and for wonderful friendship telling me that there are only beginnings in friendships.

For Archie, Charms, Vinod and Preethesh for being friends forever…

For Dhruv, for all the fights we had and the endless discussions on music and all the lovely lyrics sent to me

For Jahangir, for wisps of smoke, pan, tea, friendship and good cheers

For the haunting memories of loved ones who couldn't see this project completed, little grace, appa, amma and Thomas-kutty uncle….

Sengchi and Fenisha; for taking care of my little ones; for Watsrang, for the unstinting love for the little ones…

***mummy, daddy,** for loving me despite all disappointments and for everything you have given*

Vaava chechi, Mothi, Sharon and Nance… for being there always, propping me up with love and reprimand

amma, for being the most brave woman in the world, for loving me like her own daughter and being very supportive, financially and other wise

my sisters-in-law, Nalini, Shanta and Kallu, for their support and understanding.

My treasures, KIRAN and TEJAS, for being mine and loving me unconditionally, despite absences that distances really didn't matter. For helping me redefine motherhood and love.

Parasu, *for being patient and extending guidance whenever needed. For being the most enduring and uncomplaining partner one can ever get. For his unstinting love and support I have no words…*

babitha

For MY MOM AND DAD

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Introduction

I

I discovered the connection between the act of travelling and the experience of writing after I started travelling myself. I came across travel writing on footpaths, in railway stations and in tourist bookstalls. While I read such writing, I could see that inscribing the body on land and inscribing a pen on paper were synonymous activities at a metaphorical level. They are intricately connected. As a traveller travels in a geographical space, s/he inscribes her/his body on the terrain that is travelled. In travel, primarily, it is the physical act of covering a geographical space that is foregrounded. The metaphorical aspects, or the mental inscription of the land through writing, emerge simultaneously along with this. Through an analysis of select travel writings on India, I shall be venturing into the realms of travelling women, their writings about the land travelled and their expression of the travails and pleasures of travel in the form of writing. Basically, my study is on the various ways in which the real and imaginary image of India is constructed in the writings of contemporary British women travellers.

It was curiosity that drew me to travel writing. It was interesting to find out that in this genre, an assortment of other disciplines merged together to create a flexible and composite whole. The traversal of autobiographical, biographical, ethnological, social, historical and political narratives in travel writing is an interesting activity. While being a traveller myself, the love/hate sermons of 'I-love-Indias' and 'I-hate-Indias' seemed at once "naively celebratory [and] dismissive" (Pratt 1992:1). These reactions of mine turned out to be perfunctory as and when I delved deeper into the literature of travel. It is interesting to find

that travel writing combines two disparate, yet related activities: travel and writing. On the one hand, one can see that one necessarily need not travel [physically] while writing; yet writing can be clearly viewed as the inscriptions of the psychic travel in which the author engages herself/himself in. For example, Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, etc, are considered travel narratives by many critics, though the authors do not cover a geographical space physically. A book is also a product of its writer's psychic peregrinations. On the other hand, most of us need not necessarily write a book while we travel. However, traversing new lands can metaphorically be viewed as inscribing our bodies/selves on new terrains. Phrases like 'footprints on sand', 'imprints on earth', etc clearly indicate writing of our body on the ground we walk.

It was during my long train journeys that I came across travel writings, alternately termed as travelogues. I would call the books I have chosen as travel writing, because these do not exclusively deal with the act of travelling alone. In fact, they deal with diverse genres like history, sociology and autobiography. For example, Gillian Tindall's *City of Gold* and Georgina Harding's *Tranquebar: A Season in South India* can be treated as texts dealing with history, where as Sarah Hobson's *Family Web* can be read as a sociological text also. There are three texts which can be read as pure autobiographies. Sarah Lloyd's *An Indian Attachment*, Imogen Lycett Green's *Grandmother's Footsteps* and Jill Lowe's *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story* are purely personal narratives about their explorations of relationships in India. Only Dervla Murphy's book *On a Shoestring to Coorg* proclaims it self to be a full-fledged travel book. But in that book also we can see

the merger of different genres altogether, which really defies categorisation. This kind of fluidity in the texts that I am working on actually challenges as well as deceives the term travelogue. But in fact, I am using the umbrella term travel writing for these books, so that this may extensively include and permit entry to the act of travelling as well as writing, which, as we have already seen, need not be necessarily correlated. For instance, writings on one's experience in travelling as well as writings on one's encounter with the region, politics, history, self, etc can be brought under the ambit of this term.

As and when I use this term extensively through out my dissertation, I would also like to use the term traveller/writer for the women travellers on whom I am working. This is to specify the fact that both travelling and writing have equal importance in their life and works. Through the act of covering a geographical space as well as in writing about it, these women try to foreground their physical and mental prowess by exercising both the occupations simultaneously.

As I picked up these books, it was interesting to notice an important trend in the study of travel writing. The works of British women writers of the Raj have been unearthed from the abysses of oblivion and studied and researched upon extensively in recent times. Women's travel writing, after the breakdown of Britain's imperial supremacy, is a much-neglected realm of study. Studying the persistence of a harrowing colonial memory in the travel books that I am dealing with is an important step in understanding the manifestations of cross-cultural and interracial relations in the contemporary age.

Personally, it was the tedium of the journeys that made me pick up books with similar themes. Every railway station had an assortment of travel writing along with popular fiction, guide maps, religious booklets, etc. Guide maps used to be popular and more in circulation due of their functional values. Sporadically, one would find a William Dalrymple, Alexander Frater, Michel Wood, Eric Newby or Mark Shandy. Later, I hunted out for the travel narrations on India by women travellers. Incidentally, I came across Dervla Murphy's *On a Shoestring to Coorg* in the British Library. My Spanish friend Antia's desire to travel and write on India, and a very close intellectual association with her, in fact, made me ponder on the idea as to how it must be to travel as a foreigner. I had been her companion on many occasions. What another country means to a traveller became a very pertinent question, which stayed with me even after Antia left for Spain. Later, in my attempts to collect books on women's travel, I had gone through all the major book shops in Delhi, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram. There I could see that, travel writing is generally confined to the periphery and even among travel writers; men seem to have a better market than women. But places of tourist importance hoarded some rare books, which had gone out of publication since the first edition. Mattancherry and the Jewish Street [in Cochin] were a few of those places, which had hidden treasures of travel writing. Pavements and second hand booksellers [especially Best Books, Hyderabad] also had plenty of books on travel writing, and occasionally one could unearth women travel writers. I would say, I was privileged enough to collect those books, or photocopy them.

The books I have chosen, were selected at random and though I have tried to formulate a pattern among these books, they are not, in any sense, links in a chain or series, one leading to another. Each is quite unique in its own way. Nevertheless, they have certain commonalities, and of course differences. All these books belong to the period ranging from 1970s to 2000, covering three decades. Though unavailability of travel writings of the 50s and the 60s may sound like a clumsy excuse, it was not deliberate on my part to disassociate and segregate writings from that age from my study. Incidentally, the period from 1970 to 2000 promised a fertile ground for study. This was an age that saw the intensification and the slow waning away of the Cold War, the Tatcherian era that stressed on the composite nature of British identity, etc, on the political side and the student's revolution and the new wave of deconstruction, post colonialism and other theories on the academic side. Economically, globalisation also gave an interesting twist to the phenomenon of travelling and globe trotting.

In most shops, the books I have found were that of English/British travel writing [about India]. This is not entirely a coincidence. It is not because women from other countries did not travel or write about India. The output on travel writing from British writers on India is more mainly due to the existence of a full-fledged colonial history, which formed a historical prelude to their travel. Sadly, one can hardly find any Asian or Afro-American woman traveller who could afford to be as adventurous as White women. The persistence of differences in race, gender and of course, economy, in travelling can be treated as areas where not much research has been conducted.

In the modern academy, it is interesting to find that it was only in the latter half of the twentieth century that travel literature gained a respectable status. This was in no small measure due to the critical attention given to it by post-colonial theorists and feminists. Critics like Edward Said, Sara Mills, Stephen Greenblatt and James Clifford, tried to give a new interpretation to travel within the ambit of cultural studies. They tried to study the disparities in the distribution of power within the narrative structure of travel. Along with accounts of travel, both ancient and modern, various other modes of communications in travel, like itineraries, tourist brochures, etc, were excavated and studied critically.

Socially too there has been a boom in touring cultures and travelling during the seventies. It is interesting to see that the spirit of carnivalism and the nomadic culture was quite popular in the West, during the 60s and 70s. During Victorian times and in between the wars, the spirit of a touring culture was suppressed in England. This very phenomenon, emerged and became accepted among the youngsters of the 60sand 70s generation. The student's revolution in the late sixties and its aftermath had also brought in significant changes in the outlook of the West towards the East. Naturally, this time saw movements of social reform and liberation within Europe. Moreover, the Second World War had changed the equations of political power as America replaced all the European countries in the fray for the scramble of power. In this changed cultural and political scenario, combined with the paradoxes of embarrassment and nostalgia for the empire, there was a sudden interest and influx to the East thus triggering a sudden curiosity in the erstwhile empires. This high-flung euphoria and curiosity in the

East can be traced in the eighties Britain too. William Dalrymple talks about this peculiar phenomenon of Britain being in the grip of a Raj revival in his much acclaimed book the *City of Djinns: A Year in Delhi*. He says:

> The British public wallowed in a nostalgic vision of the Raj as some sort of extended soap-opera – *Upstairs, Downstairs* writ large over the plains of Asia. *The Jewel in the Crown* was being shown on television, and the correspondence columns of *The Times* were full of complaints from old India hands about the alleged inaccuracies in Attenborough's *Gandhi*. Academic presses were churning out books on the buildings of the Empire while the Booker shortlist could be counted on to include at least two books whose plot involved around the Raj (1994: 71).

This curiosity in the eighties was carried forward in the nineties due to globalisation later on. Globalisation had also further perpetuated an enormous interest in tourism, which also brought around a lot of travellers to the East, especially to India.

In this dissertation, my intention is to locate the narratives of select British women travellers within the parameters of a geopolitical locale and cross cultural associations as well as interracial transactions. I shall look also look at how these elements are mediated through the genre of travel writing. The main thrust of my dissertation is to find out various ways and means in which the traveller's identity is constituted in the process of perceiving the Other.

For this inquiry, primarily, it is essential to take a look at the history of travelling women and their presence in the genre of travel writing. Even a cursory look at travel narratives of the past indicates that travelling was a male-controlled activity. From the ancient times, women too must have travelled a great deal, considering the evidence we have of migrations undertaken by communities as a whole, but until the 15th century there is practically no record of the fact that the female imagination and sense of adventure too explored the possibilities offered by travelling. It is important to note that community migrations were basically a mass movement from one place to another rather than an adventure, which would necessarily mean exercising one's free will to travel, explore and be adventurous. Probably this was one of the major reasons why women's voices in travel writing had been absent till the late renaissance era.

This absence in the realm of travel writing is briefly touched upon by Barthes in *A Lover's Discourse* (quoted in Lawrence 1994: ix). This book explains to us the reasons of a woman's silent presence in narratives of exploration and adventure. Barthes says:

> Historically, the discourse of absence is carried on by the woman: Woman is sedentary, Man hunts, journeys; Woman is faithful (she waits), man is fickle (he sails away, he cruises). It is the woman who gives shape to his absence, elaborates his fiction, for she has time to do so: she weaves and sings; the Spinning Songs express both immobility (by the hum of the Wheel) and absence (far away rhythms of travel, sea surges, cavalcades). It

> follows that in any man who utters the other's absence, *something feminine* is declared… (Lawrence 1994: ix).

The literary critic Karen Lawrence sees Barthes's analysis as a case of gendering travel. She acknowledges the fact that he finds the fissures within women's travelling and silent waiting that have been opened up for study by Barthes, perhaps in a cursory manner. Lawrence discusses the element of silence in the realm of travel writing and elaborates on the fact that travelling had been constructed as a gendered terrain in purely metaphorical ways of implicit and explicit associations. Basically she analyses the Western lores and tales of travel and the counter tales of waiting women based on myths or models for the place of women in the society (Lawrence 1994: xi). She further studies them with the help of *Ulysses*, his mythical story and the travelling notions proffered by this text, which, in a way, held the canonical anchor to Western travel:

> Away from home Odysseus is preoccupied, even the stories he tells while on his journey are on subjects other than the beloved. But Penelope, with time on her hands, her hands at the loom, tells one story, if she tells at all. Indeed one can say that despite their difference in energy and focus, adventure literature and domestic novel share a powerful assumption: that "woman's place" is first and foremost at home. The woman beloved is the "fixt foot" that "makes no show to move", as Donne puts it; the male foot of the compass explores the world around it, tracing its journey as it goes ('Valediction Forbidding Mourning'). Geographically enacting the circular pattern of an exilic narrative like the *Odyssey*, Donne's conceit also

> provides a metaphor for the inscription of the male journey, for travel writing as well as travel (1994: x).

Thus, the tradition of Western travel, according to Lawrence, had encapsulated the symbols of travelling men and waiting women. Patricia Lorcin, who had elaborately worked on the travel writings by women, says that the first narrative of travel by a woman had been written only as early/late as the 15th century.

> In the first place, the body of literature is vast, spread over time and space. As early as the 15th century, women were recording impressions of their travels (*The Book of Margery Kempe*, 1436). Since then, not only have hundreds of women of all nationalities put pen to paper to describe their travels, but they have done so while trekking to every corner of the world (Lorcin).

From this period however, women travellers, like their male counterparts/partners, begin to redefine the genre of travel writing and leave imprints of their gendered selves in accounts of travel. Many of them have left behind their thoughts and memoirs, reflections and ruminations about the places in which they have travelled. Travel for them was not only an encounter with new places, people and cultures; it was also their encounter with the 'self' and the 'other'. It is this interface between the 'self' and the 'other' that forms the primary interest of my study of women travellers in independent India. I wish to look at how 'India' is configured and represented in the writings of these women whose identities emerge out of their confrontation with the 'other' world. It is

interesting to see how these women travel writers conjure up a space on which they have travelled, through their writings. We can also see how their locations and relocations through travel redefine their notions of "home and family, community and liminality, self and the other" (Lawrence 1994: xii).

II

Probably the first English women travellers who came to India were the ones who were either wives or sisters of various Raj bureaucrats. We have, for example Maria Graham, who travelled with her father and met her first husband in India; Emily Eden, who came down to India in 1835 accompanying her brother; and Anne Katherine Elwood, who accompanied her husband to India in 1825 were pioneers in this field (Ghose 1998: 20). This sudden insurge of women travellers was primarily a result of the will to curb miscegenation that was taking place on a large scale. Till early 19th century, cross mixing and inter race marriages were so common among the company soldiers that the government thought it necessary to ship in women from England to curb this trend. This tendency to curb race mixture was a consequence of the industrial revolution and Britain's adoption of newer ways of controlling trade and empire.

Besides that it is also interesting to find how the dissemination of knowledge and the import of public school educated personnel from England also tried to check cross breeding and mixing of the English and Indians. Nandy, in *Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Nandy 1994), gives us an interesting picture of the sudden acceptance of the modern framework of

knowledge that was introduced among the British after a hundred years of the existence of East India Company. After the wars of Plassey [1757], Buxar [1764] and Mysore [1767-69, 1780-84, 1790-92 and 1799], the British had got a firm foothold in India. The capture of Bengal in 1772 made them an indomitable power in the sub-continent. Hastings became the first Governor General of India and a Supreme Court was also established to gain political and judicial control through strict bureaucracy. Pramod Nayar summarises how imperial responsibilities were administered to the youth of England to make them the future administrators of India:

> From the last years of the eighteenth century, especially with Hastings, there was a 'moral awakening' of Britain.... An increasing feeling of 'imperial responsibility' prevailed. This responsibility was of uplifting the heathen, savage and backward naïve... missionaries poured into India in sharp contrast to the previous century (Nayar: 1997: 22).

Meanwhile, the Indian Civil Services along with the public school system in Britain, indoctrinated upperclass young men into a new cult of masculinity with an emphasis on discipline, knowledge and the power to control. As Philip Mason says:

> [the student at the public school] learned to do as he was told with out question; later he learned to take it for granted that he would be obeyed. He learned to punish and encourage. He learned in short to rule (1982: 170).

This trend was fictionalised in Thomas Hughes's *Thomas Brown's School Days* (1857), which was set in the Rugby School, a famous public school for boys in the 1830s. The early chapters of the novel deal with the hero's childhood at his home and the latter ones show the slow transformation of the boy under Dr. Thomas Arnold, the headmaster. How Thomas Brown, the hero, develops himself into a gentleman with piety, obedience and good health, tells us a lot about the schooling system prevalent among the elites. This was indeed a system which taught the pupils to be the right rulers of a colony, by emphasising the merits of transforming the docile, home bred and 'vulnerable' young boys to tough, disciplined and courageous arbiters of a better tomorrow. Groups of public school educated young men were shipped to India as part of a psychological manoeuvre to rule India. The masculine, virile young men exploring and civilizing the savage race was a prevalent trope during that time. Once public school educated men from Britain started taking over the East India Company, it was necessary for the government to ship in their right female matches or 'better halves' from England.

As we have discussed earlier, during the colonial period, many English women travelled to India and a few had distinguished themselves as writers. Two decades after India's independence there was a movement towards the East, which was simultaneous with the hippie culture of the West. It is possible that there have been many women travellers who had visited India soon after independence. But not many texts are there to illustrate their experience of India. Even if they are there, the books were not to be found in the market. The debunking of two decades is not a deliberate one, but purely coincidental due to sheer

unavailability of travel narratives by women on India. But from the 70s onwards we can find a gold rush towards India. The hippie movement and the advent of an enlightened mass of enthusiasts who were informed by the deconstructionist and post-colonial and feminist discourses might have very well sparked a healthy curiosity in knowing about the former colony of Britain. Based on this information, while reading the available texts and literature on British women travelling in India, one can divide them into two groups - those who came before, and those who came after Independence. This categorization is not wholly unproblematic but it is convenient for the following reasons.

The historical/political and social specificity of India's independence from over a century of British rule can in itself be regarded as a point of departure. Also, women travellers of the Raj period came to India as part and parcel of the Raj bureaucracy's domestic package [disparagingly termed as the 'fishing fleet'] (Barr: 1987: 6) or occasionally, as part of the Raj's missionary baggage. Women travellers to Independent India were under no such imperial and bureaucratic compulsions [Here by no means do I want to paint a liberated woman flaunting her license to take her own decisions and willing to travel any where. It is true that some sense of autonomy in the mobility of women in the West prevailed, but it will be quite fallacious to sketch an image of a completely liberated woman]. They enjoyed freedom at least from the more overt coercive strategies of the Raj period. At least for some women travellers in Independent India, travelling was a personal choice. Pursuing one's traveller's itch was synonymous with the exploration of one's self, as well as the quest for what lay beyond the frontiers.

Thus, independent India becomes the take-off point, not only because of the independence of the country, but also that of the people travelling to it. Moreover, British women were travelling with a new identity, mostly out of their own will, to a country, which had been formerly colonised by their men. The sense of nostalgia involved in the act of travelling to India is also a major point, which would be explored, in the coming chapters.

For this study, I have chosen seven texts by British women travellers, which appeared over three decades. In these texts I shall be looking into the elements that have gone into the construction of India. The texts chosen for my research are: *On a Shoestring to Coorg: An Experience of South India* by Dervla Murphy (1976), Sarah Hobson's *Family Web* (1978), Gillian Tindall's *City of Gold: Biography of Bombay* (1982), *An Indian Attachment* by Sarah Lloyd (1984), *Tranquebar: A Season in South India* (1992) by Georgina Harding, *Grandmother's Footsteps: A Journey in Search of Penelope Bentjeman* (1994) by Imogen Lycett Green and Jill Lowe's *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story* (2003). [1]

Of all the women writers I am working on, Dervla Murphy is a travel writer with an international reputation. She had written many travel accounts of great fame and repute. She, in her early thirties, is one of the first women to have gone on an international adventure on her Armstrong Cadet Bicycle from Ireland to India. This adventure took her through Europe, Persia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. She recounts these adventures in her blockbuster *Full Tilt: Ireland to India with a Bicycle*. Murphy's *On a Shoestring to Coorg: An Experience of South India* is an itinerary cum travel book that recounts her exploration of Coorg in 1974.

Gillian Tindall's *City of Gold* (1983) traces the history of Bombay from its colonial past to the present. Tindall lived in Kentish town for over thirty-five years. Her first book, *The Fields Beneath* was published in 1977 and remained in print throughout the 1980s. Meanwhile, Tindall, who has also made a name as a novelist and biographer, produced historical studies based on place, extending her range to include both rural France and Bombay. Her *Celestine, Voices from a French Village* (1995), was another attempt at writing history, and it has won several awards in England and in France. She is engaged in writing in London at present. Her latest book *The House by the Thames* was published very recently in April 2006.

Grandmother's Footsteps (1994) is about Imogen Lycett Green's sojourn in Manali to trace her roots that deeply lay buried in the colonial past. In this book, the present often dovetails into the past. The author invokes the past through a series of biographical meanderings and reminiscences about her personal interactions with the people there.

Sarah Lloyd was born in London in 1947 and was trained as a landscape architect and a photographer. She started travelling at the age of twenty-five and after that she remained a compulsive traveller. Sarah Lloyd's *An Indian Attachment* (1984) is an autobiographical piece on her amorous liaison with a Sikh whom she named Jungli. Lloyd identifies Jungli with India. In 1987 she published her second book *Chinese Characters*, a travelogue based on her eight months in China.

Sarah Hobson had accompanied her husband, Tony to implement an Oxfam project on family planning in India. But then she stayed back with a family in South India to write a book of her own, replenished with photographs. Georgina Harding travelled to South India with her one-year-old son and stayed in Tranquebar, a former Danish colony to write on the monuments of the past. Her book is a journey in time, shuttling back and forth, interspersed with the past and the present. After *Tranquebar: A Season in South India*, she went on to write another non-fictional book called *In Another Europe*. Her first novel *The Solitude of Thomas Cave* is due to be published in February, 2007. *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story* can be considered as Jill Lowe's debut to the world of published writing. She is a professional tourist guide in London who comes to India and falls in love with her driver, who is twelve years her junior. This book is about her exploration of India as well as the review of her relationship with Yadav which ends happily in their marriage.

As indicated earlier, though I deal with travel narratives in independent India, I was unable to include any texts that belong to the 50s and 60s because I did not come across any. Otherwise, I have tried to represent all the decades from 1970 onwards. All the women writers I am dealing with are British and White. Texts after India's independence have been chosen because not many works on post-colonial travelling has been explored. Whereas, many works on the preceding colonial period have been researched upon extensively. With the backdrop of studies held on colonial travellers, this unexplored realm of new age travelling by women definitely offered a new interest.

This research is carried on by keeping in mind the fact that India has the definite status of a former colony in the eyes of these women. Here, I shall also look at the various ways in which an embarrassing memory of the Raj is worked up to amusing, yet nostalgic levels through these narratives. Woman's status as a traveller was another important aspect, which drew me to this topic. Superficially, there is a semblance of democracy and equality when a woman goes exploring. But what are the constraints and difficulties faced by a woman travelling in a strange land? What are the women-specific experiences, which make their mobility a unique one? And when they inscribe their body on the land travelled what are generic models they adopt to express themselves linguistically? When we take a cursory look at the texts chosen we can see that these texts can be broadly classified into autobiographical writings, historiography and documents on sociology with illustrated case studies. But it will be too simplistic and limiting if we stop our inquiry there, in most of the texts the genres traverse with a harmonious ease.

So by analysing these texts, I shall attempt to define travel literature as a genre and the position of women within the genre. Different generic categories like autobiographical narratives, biographies, itineraries, and historiography, the mapping out of geographical frontiers, cultural and social etchings and ethnographic analyses converge in these texts. The rationale behind the selection of these texts is the distinctive features embedded within them. They can be treated as the representative texts of British women's writings on India. They also belong to specific decades beginning from 1970s onwards. Interestingly, they are

written at different stand points in the history of India such as the Emergency era in the mid-70s, the Babri Masjid demolition in 1991 and the era of globalisation after 1990s.

The methodology I have used in this dissertation is firstly a post-colonial one. But as and when I progressed into the actual analyses of texts, I could see that, despite stereotypes and recurrent images of the past which appear in these texts, the elements of critique and self enquiry also become pre-dominant themes here. Most of the women travellers are aware of their subject position as Western/White travellers as and when they travel and write about it. This kind of a self-conscious enquiry makes it a more interesting area to be studied and therefore it defies the boundaries of a unilateral post-colonial enquiry. Thus, this study basically has women's studies as its main purport. As a woman traveller myself, my main emphasis shall be on how other women travel and try to represent whatever is seen and experienced while travelling.

III

Review of Secondary Texts

Here, as I deal with travel writing, women's role and participation in this need to be looked at carefully. For this study, I have gone through various theoreticians and critics who have worked extensively on travel writing. Percy Adams's *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel* (1983), is a seminal book which makes a case for a literary status for travel writing and helped this genre upgrade itself from its much mistreated status in the periphery. Karen Lawrence in her

Penelope's Voyages discusses the problem of gendering within travel writing. Judy Long's *Telling Lives* further elaborates on the traversal of generic boundaries within travel writing. She says that generic boundaries and compartmentalisations are constructions that befit male writing. Long says that:

> The applications of generic standards operate to restrict the range of accepted writing exploring limits via reward and punishment. The activity of exclusion is carried out by the critics who perform public and published acts of evaluation. Their disavowal of identification enhances their claims to objectivity, which in turn buttress the social control function of genre (1999: 8-9).

While we look at certain critics who have attempted to define the subtle differences between a traveller, an explorer and a tourist, we can find the problematics of the blindfolded usage and transference of definitions meant for male realms and discourses. Paul Fussell in his book *Abroad: British Literary Travel between Wars* (1983) makes a fine distinction between an explorer, traveller and tourist. Here, it is interesting to see another attempt of trying to define and categorise travellers themselves:

> "Explorers… are to the ordinary traveller what the Saint is to the average Church congregation." …No traveller, and certainly no tourist, is ever knighted for his performances, although the strains he may undergo can be as memorable as an explorer's. All three make journeys, but the explorer seeks the undiscovered, the traveller, that which has been

> discovered by the mind working in history, the tourist that which has been discovered by entrepreneurship and prepared for him by the arts of mass publicity. The genuine traveller is or used to be, in the middle between the two extremes. If the explorer moves towards the risks of the formless and the unknown, the tourist moves toward the security of pure cliché. It is between these two poles that the traveller mediates, retaining all he can of the excitement to the unpredictable attaching to the exploration and fusing that with the pleasure of "knowing where one is" belonging to tourism (1980:39).

Though the tourist/explorer/traveller distinction is finely made, it is worthwhile to notice that these boundaries are strictly created to categorise male travellers. Smrti KP in her unpublished dissertation *Memsahib Writes Back* (1999) tells us these categorisations are inadequate to define women travellers during the time of the Raj and that it is essential to include a fourth set of travellers who were not mere travellers or explorers or tourists. They were the memsahibs who travelled to India during the time of the Raj and settled in India for a few years. In my study of the women travel writers who travelled to independent India, there is a distinct divergence and break from the earlier period as travelling becomes a confluence of all the three activities: that is travelling, exploring and touring. In fact, while studying them I could also see that they have collapsible walls and these distinctions cannot be maintained easily. One can also see that exploration and travel have implications of male adventure and romance connected to it. They also have connotations of exclusivity that have always been associated with

a privileged Western male traveller. However, tourism represents the consummation of the need of the masses to see other places with a stress on the pleasure phenomenon that can be purchased along with it. In fact, travelling in today's world is closely related to the economy, class, gender and race of travellers. These elements specifically constitute and determine the amalgamation of these three categories. The existence of these categories as solitary and isolated, without any alliances and connections with each other, can be repudiated by a single instance of space tourism. Exploring the unknown and the privilege of luxury travel that is connected with tourism coalesce into one and the same without any hitches in this venture.

While looking at other texts and critics who have written on travel, it is especially worthwhile to look at Peter Osborne's *Travelling Light; Photography, Travel and Visual Culture* (2000), where the author considers travel a mode of discovery. Osborne emphasises the importance of travel as a source material for expanding markets in literary and visual goods. He also stresses the sights and encounters of the traveller, the experiences and the visual encounters, which actually add to the act of travelling. This reminds us of Greenblatt's account of the traveller as a 'self-fashioning' mobile individual whose rehearsed personality could adapt to changing situations (1991: 227). Greenblatt was one of those critics who brought in a colonial angle to travel studies.

Many recent critics have also worked on the dimension of travel writing as a colonial enterprise. Andrew Hadfield's book, *Literature, Travel and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance, 1525-1625* (2002) is a study on the twofold

generic divisions of 'colonial writing' and 'travel writing', prior to conflating the two. Hadfield, in this book, illustrates the interconnections between the two, drawing heavily on New Historicist and Cultural Materialist theorists, to explore these genres as separate entities first and later, their relation with each other. Similarly, Nigel Leask's *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing: 1770-1840*(2002), investigates European travel writing in countries situated within the 'torrid zones' of Asia, Africa and America. Leask explores the sense of 'antiquity' shared by countries like Ethiopia, Egypt, India and Mexico despite the geographic and cultural distances they have from each other. In this book, the author speaks about the mechanical regularity of the sense of wonder and curiosity which pervaded European minds. My study is further supported by the works of theorists like Barbara Maria Strafford who had researched and written on illustrated travelogues in her book *Voyage into Substance: Art, Science, Nature, and Illustrated Travel Account 1760-1840* (1984). There, she argues that, in the guise of objectivity and empiricism, the romantic enquiries and sentimentalities of the traveller supplanted the travelogues of the time.

On analysing the early theories on travel writing, we find that a large portion of theories either ignored or debunked the perspective of a woman traveller-cum-writer. It was due to the intense and singular efforts of critics like Mary Louise Pratt and Sara Mills that a specific gender angle was brought into travel writing. Besides this, these critics unearthed many obsolete writings of women travellers and extensively researched upon by these critics. Other critics like Innes and Royer in *Breaking Boundaries: New Perspectives in Women's Writing* (1997),

observe the subversive potential in travel writing, which was exploited by the women travellers of America. They applauded the social criticisms and corrective narratives adopted by women travel writers, which formed an essential part of criticism on dominant travel narratives. However, while analyzing the blurring boundaries between travel documents and regional writing, Innes and Royer, remain silent on the colonial narratives rendered by travelling women. This issue is taken up by Sara Mills in *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women Travel Writing and Colonialism* (1993). There she studies a series of travel books by British women and argues thus:

> In a colonial context, British women were allowed to figure as symbols of home and purity, women as active participants could barely be conceived of. This is because of the social conventions of conceptualizing imperialism, which seemed to be as much about constructing *masculine* British identity as national identity *per se*. For this reason, women as individuals and writers are always seen to be marginal to the process of colonialism (1993: 3).

Mary Louise Pratt in her pioneering book *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992) formulates the concept of 'contact zones'. Contact zones according to her are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination…" (1992: 3). She also analyzes the significance of travel writing as one of the ideological apparatuses of the empire through which hegemonies of power could be effectively disseminated. Following the theoretical

formulations of Pratt and Mills, Margaret Macmillan (1996), Julia Kaey (1994), Indrani Sen (2002) and Indira Ghose (1998) have done textual studies of various women travel writers of the Raj. Ghose is of the opinion that

> [W]hile women travellers have become the focus of a tremendous upsurge in interest, thanks to the popularity of women's studies, work on women travellers tends to wallow in the anecdotal and to concentrate on constructing the myth of the intrepid, autonomous heroine braving all odds in the wilds. Travel writings are read as adventure tales. While the emancipatory function of travel for women is rightly stressed, in the case of female writers, all critical faculties, so acutely deployed in the analysis of men's texts, are, it seems, suspended, and critics obediently read along with the text instead of reading it against the grain (2002: 3).

Ghose adopts a Foucauldian, post-colonial framework in her text thus representing the women travellers within a colonial ambit, as active participants in the machinery of colonialism. She analyses the writings of colonial women travellers like Emily Eden, Fanny Parkes, Marianne Postens, Isabella Bird, Maria Graham, Mary Carpenter, etc. But these women critics come to an impasse with the assessment of the women travellers of the post-colonial period. My thesis primarily deals with the women travellers of independent India, nevertheless constant parallels and contrast shall be drawn from the colonial past in order to demonstrate the historical continuities and disjunctures.

At this juncture, it would be interesting as well as necessary to take a cursory look at the social environment, the literary and the cultural vistas of the post-war, colony-depleted Britain. Philip Tew in his *The Contemporary British Novel* comments on the post-war British literary scenario:

> Britain had transformed itself and was not simply a continuation of the post war conditions (…) In terms of culture, politics, world affairs, identity politics and creativity the 1970s represent both a watershed and a period of fundamental change for Britain, one that in retrospect, can be seen to rival and not simply be an extension of the changes brought about by the second world war (2004: 2).

There was specifically a shift in the literary, intellectual and social culture of Britain and the society as a whole had been perceived as hybrid and culturally composite that underwent "combining, changing, often transitional identities and subjectivities" (Tew 2004: 30). This awareness can also be seen as a major reason for a passage to the East. East stood for the very cultural, social and spiritual other, waiting to be further encountered and explored. Though centuries of cross-cultural encounters were there to prove the statement wrong, the region offered plenty of novelty with some amount of colonial guilt-strings attached. Moreover, it stood for all the values antithetical to that of the West. For many women travellers empowered by their position as the 'new' woman in charge of their own destinies, travel and writing became tropes of self expression. It is also interesting to see the time in which they travelled to India. Murphy and Hobson travelled to India during the time of Emergency and Jill Lowe, during the time of

Babri Masjid demolition. These writers are uncannily silent about the political happenings on India. These disturbing events surface only as matter-of-fact incidents in their books. They do not dwell on the political implications of the events due to various reasons. Primarily, none of them was directly affected by these happenings. Secondly, they were mostly encircled in the places of interest which were remote from the areas of disturbances. For example, Murphy was in Coorg, Hobson in South India and Lowe was in a small village in Haryana. By no way can these be treated as political disengagements. But this is a pointer to the fact that they found fodder for their travel thoughts in their direct involvement and personal experiences. Interestingly, one can also read gender specific sentiments in this kind of direct political detachments. For most of the women writers, travelling becomes so personal that at some point of time their subjective experiences take precedence over the political realities of the country they are travelling.

Chapterization

The first chapter is the present one, 'Introduction', which tries to introduce the subject, lay forward its theoretical formulations, methods of research adapted in the dissertation, review of literary texts and chapterization. The second chapter, which is the first of the core chapters, of this dissertation, 'From a Visual Odyssey to Paysage Interieur,' maps the journey of women in space and how they try to represent the space they witness and encounter in the form of landscaping. The third chapter, 'Boulevard of [Broken] Dreams: Her Versions of [His]tory' deals with how women travellers look at time and try to narrate the past through the

present. The fourth chapter 'Of Grandmothers and Lovers: Knowing the Land through Relationships,' tries to encapsulate the women's journey through their selves in the form of autobiographies, memoirs and recollections from personal experiences and how they forge intimate personal relations in India so as to locate temporary abodes for them.

'From a Visual Odyssey to Paysage Interieur,' deals with the geographical construction of India. This chapter looks at landscape as a text. Literally, it is the humanization of the landscape that is the main focus of this chapter. Traditionally, in a positivistic sense, analysing landscape in a given text meant looking at the aesthetic descriptions and finding similar literary analogies. But, in this chapter, I shall be looking at landscape as a cultural product, with complexities of race and gender written into it.

Landscaping, in this dissertation, involves the complex procedure of narrating the panorama of 'land' [*geo graphien* means 'writing the land']. I want to bring under the purview of landscaping the textualization of the rural and urban scenery as well, which shall be named as country and city scaping hereafter. Most importantly, the 'writing' of the 'human beings' who are also deemed as inseparable from that of the land shall be termed 'bodyscaping'. The aesthetic representation of the 'human body' as part and parcel of the rural or the urban landscape, I believe, is an underlying strategy that can be perceived in most travel narratives. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part analyses how landscaping is described linguistically and the second part looks at the illustrative aspects of landscaping.

'Boulevard of [Broken] Dreams: Her Versions of [His]tory' deals with the narration of History in the source texts. There is an overlap between the subjective 'participatory narrative' and the 'objective' historiographic narration or commentary on the social, cultural and religious ethos of India. The two reinforce and validate each other to such an extent that the boundaries between them are little more than convenient notions. I shall examine them in the same spirit with which I shall study the expressive tropes, figures and allegories that constitute and disseminate cultural and historical truths.

'Of Grandmothers and Lovers: Knowing the land through Relationships,' is the fourth chapter. Here, I will look into the realm of personal experience which goes into the construction and narration of a particular country. I shall look into the autobiographical travel narrations of three authors and how they forge a relationship with India via the people with whom they are intimate. Through their life stories they try to represent an India based on the authority of their experiential 'reality'. The second, third and fourth are core chapters that look at how space, time and relationships are comprehended and narrated through travel texts in order to narrate the alien 'other'; that is India.

The final chapter, 'Conclusion', shall sum up the main arguments of the previous chapters. Besides that, it shall also be looking into areas in this field which promise further research. In this chapter, I shall also look at how experiences are created from an authorial point of view, substantiated with a traveller authority. I shall also be looking into the mechanisms - such as stereotypical metaphors,

anecdotes, verbal clichés, etc., - that go into the construction of ‘India’ for the Western reader.

[1] The Source Texts that I am going to deal with shall be henceforth mentioned in the notes in their abbreviated upper case. For example *On a Shoestring to Coorg will* be indicated as OASC; *Grandmother's Footsteps: A Journey in Search of Penelope Bentjeman* , shall be referred to as GF, *Family Web* as FW, *City of Gold: Biography of Bombay* as CG, *Tranquebar: A Season in South India* by Georgina Harding as TASSI, *An Indian Attachment* by Sarah Lloyd as IA and *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story,* YRLS. Complete references are repeated in the works cited after each chapter.

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Chapter II

From a Visual Odyssey to *Paysage Interieur*: Landscape in Travel Writing

Introduction

In this chapter, I shall be analysing two travel texts, *On a Shoestring to Coorg* by Dervla Murphy and *Family Web* by Sarah Hobson to analyse the phenomenon of landscaping that runs through travel texts of British women writing on India. I shall be also looking at parts of Gillian Tindall's *City of Gold: A Biography of Bombay*, to substantiate my arguments. As a background, I shall be looking at the skeins of meanings of landscapes, as they existed in the literary and metaphorical contexts in English literature. For this, the history of landscaping in English literature and its connection with the concepts of quests/conquests that existed from medieval times and their importance in travel writing shall be looked into. This enquiry is, in turn, supported by the philosophical developments that took place in the aesthetics of vision in Europe. These investigations bring about the historical and political relevance of landscaping in literature as well in arts. How landscaping as a phenomenon construed the paradigms of the city and the country, the idyllic and the artificial, can be wrought out in our analysis of the history of landscaping. The quest for the idyllic took the adventurers to the far and distant lands where they conjured up real and imaginary landscapes; and this eventually led them to the possession of the land along with its resources. The knowledge of this can explain the far-reaching colonial implications of landscaping.

But these histories are limited in the sense that they look at the way in which a man depicts an alien landscape. The quest and conquest can be primarily seen as male tropes which were definitely internalised by women travellers too, to a certain extent. By looking at the way how landscaping is handled in the texts

of British women travellers in India, one can see how a negotiation between the pre-existent tropes of travelling [which were primarily male] and subjective female experiences, combine and coerce with each other.

As a traveller/writer travels in a different geographical space, we can observe a distinct feature in their writings. That is the description of landscape, without which any travel book would be incomplete. Narration of the landscape is an important aspect that adds a descriptive gloss to the physical act of travelling. In this chapter, I would like look at landscape as a text. By studying landscape, I shall be looking into the linguistic as well as the illustrative aspect of the visual phenomenon, gleaned through the mobile/physical act of travelling. These aspects need not be necessarily complementary, but in many texts we can see them enrich each other. For example, linguistic descriptions of a place are meant to evoke the visual spectacle; where as the illustrative aspects, like drawings, photographs, etc, need not necessarily buttress a linguistic narration.

If we look at the dictionary meanings of landscape,[1] we can trace the emphasis on the primacy of the 'visible features', which can be 'improved' or changed via illustrations, photographs, etc. These definitions also point to the fact landscape is the representation of a visible stretch of land which is already there which can be, at the same time, controlled and altered by the one who is seeing it. That is, the 'landscape' which is already there as a physical phenomenon, can reasonably be rearranged from the point of view of the beholder.

These meanings point to the fact that a manual grooming and altering of a given piece of land is connected with landscape. Taking on the possibility of physical alteration, critics like Jay Appleton (1996), Simon Schama (1995), Richard C. Poulsen (1992), Richard Muir(1999), etc, have gone a step further by investigating landscape as a mental category of analysis as well by tracing the literary, cultural as well as the political history behind its construction. In their definitions of the landscape, we can see a poignant departure in the concept of 'landscape' as a phenomenon which is associated with land and its perceptions. They bring in the aspect of the power of visuality and the mind that works behind various ways of perceiving when they try to define 'landscape'. For example, when the critic Simon Schama, in his *Landscape and Memory*, traces the etymology of the word landscape, he brings in the aspect of 'pleasure' that is associated with seeing:

> [Landscape] entered the English language, along with 'herring' and 'bleached linen' as a Dutch import at the end of the sixteenth century. And landschap, like its Germanic root, Landscaft, signified a unit of human occupation, indeed a jurisdiction, as much as anything that might be a pleasing object of depiction (1995: 10).

Here again, the authority of man over land and the capacity to 'control' and alter it in a pleasing manner are emphasised. Another important critic, Richard C. Poulsen, in his *Landscape of the Mind*, brings in the aspect of 'mind' over 'physical' nature as he defines 'landscape' in a rather rhetorical manner:

> What is landscape (land akin to Irish *lann*, Welsh *lann*, "Church' + 'scape' – Old English *sceap*, akin to German *schaft*, 'relationship' or 'creation'; thus landscape = 'a church relationship', a sacrilazation of the land by endowing it with a transforming image; quite literally, 'a creation of land')? (1992: 10)

In these writings, we can see landscape emerging as a crucial category where the 'physical' aspects of it are embellished with the mental imaginings. From the backdrop of these arguments which ground the depiction of landscape as a phenomenon which is imbued with the power of the beholder, I shall be looking into the act of 'landscaping' which appears in the writings of the traveller/writers on whom I am working on. For this, it is important to look at 'landscape in the text' and importantly 'landscape as a text'.

In traditional classical writings a text meant,

> the actual words of a book, poem, etc, in the original form they have been transmitted in or transmuted into; a book of such words; words set to music, the main body of matter in a book, distinguished from notes, commentary or any other subsidiary matter; the exact wording of a book or piece of writing as opposed to a translation, paraphrase or revision… (Oxford Dictionary: 2003).

Here, the 'words' in a book, music, etc, are elevated to a meaningful and linguistically comprehensible status as texts. It can be said that the description of landscape in travel narratives also fall under this category. Here, following critics like Appleton, Muir and Schama, I would like to extend the meaning of a 'text' in a Barthesean sense in which one can read meanings into the realm of

the unspoken. Such a realm would which include paintings, music, maps, the description of landscape, etc, as cultural productions in its fold. These cultural productions are seen as active signifiers imbued with meaning. By looking at landscape as a category for cultural analysis, I shall be adopting an 'expanded' view of the landscaping as a text.

'Landscaping' in this Dissertation

In my dissertation, I shall be referring to 'landscaping' as an act that involves the observation and linguistic depiction of the scenery that is observed by the traveller. Literally, it is the humanization of the landscape that is the main focus of this chapter. I do not want to confine the meaning of the word to the description of picturising the countryside alone. Landscaping, as used in this study, involves the complex procedure of narrating the panorama of 'land' [*geo graphien* means writing the land], which does not necessarily straitjacket the term as the inscription of rural and urban landscape alone. Parallel to the formal and structural construction of the land, the natural/artificial equipments that go with it [the rivers, trees, houses, automobiles, etc] shall also be considered part and parcel of the narration of the landscape. I want to bring under the purview of landscaping the textualization of the rural and urban scenery as well, which shall be called as 'country' and 'cityscaping', respectively hereafter. Most importantly, the 'writing' of the 'human beings', who are also deemed as inseparable from the land, shall be termed '"bodyscaping"' in this chapter. The aesthetic representation of the 'human body' as part and parcel of the rural or the urban landscape, I believe, is an underlying strategy that can be perceived in most travel narratives.

By analysing 'landscaping', I shall be looking at narration that transcribes the 'facts' which are seen , observed and translated into a written form for a target audience. I shall bring within the purview of 'landscaping' the detailed, contextual readings of the land made by the author. These include:

(1) The depiction of the landscape through the verbal or the linguistic medium. This particular aspect shall be analysed with help of the texts that I am working on. Here I shall be looking into the tropes and metaphors employed to persuade the reader to specific points of view.

(2) The graphic description of places/spaces, which fall further under two categories:

a) The larger spaces indicated in the larger framework of the 'outside', for example: maps. Maps are as the best examples of description of the specific details of the larger topos under scrutiny.

b) The delineation of the smaller spaces or the 'insides' [e.g. The graphic depiction of a typical architectural design of an Indian house which describes the concept of space distribution within the domestic hold, the detailed etching of family trees, etc]

(3) The photographic narratives, narration of human bodies with the help of photographic stills. This is an important feature in travel writing. How the eyes of the camera selectively capture the life in action, which are meant for transmitting some specific messages, will be a major point of study in my dissertation. Under this category, I shall bring in sketches, illustrations, etc, made by the travel writer herself.

To analyse the constitution or the construction of 'realities' of landscape as texts, to begin with, it is necessary to embark on the tradition of landscaping in English literature.

The literary and aesthetic tradition of landscaping

Travel and landscaping being the primary concerns in this chapter, it is interesting to look at the various ways in which both enhanced each other in English Literature. In this section, I shall be looking at the development of a definitive aesthetics in landscaping which is closely related to literature and art. The phenomenon of landscaping, according to the critic Appleton, could be traced back to the Renaissance period. He cites Hussey's *The Picturesque Studies: Studies in a Point of View* (London: Putnam, 1967), to elaborate the fact that the English "awakened to an appreciation of landscape during the time of the Renaissance as the English nobility and gentry came into close contact with continental landscape paintings and Italian landscape"(1996: 24). Another critic, Simon Schama elaborates on this by stating that that was the period that saw the European encounter with the modern edifices of culture, like "(E)mpire, nation, freedom, enterprise and dictatorship" and he elaborates on how these institutions "have invoked topography to give their ruling ideas a natural form" (1995: 27).

These critics point out the fact that it was during Renaissance that the allure of landscape caught the imagination of the English and found a creative space in their literature. However, it is to be noted that travel existed as an enterprising activity as early as the Middle Ages. It was during that time that the expansionist zeal of the Crusades had been levitated to fervent spiritual

excesses. As early as that period one can easily see the correlation between the quest [of the spiritual 'self'] and the conquest of terrains [of the physical 'other']. The reflection of this theme can be seen in the literature and legends of those times[2] (Mohanty 2003: 23).

Claude Levi-Strauss, who brilliantly interwove the theme of travel/quest and its relation to the quest for one's self in the European context in his *Tristes Tropiques*, sums up that travel and discovery brought

> ...that crucial moment in modern thought, when, thanks to the great voyages of discovery, a human community which had believed itself to be complete in its final form suddenly learned...that it was not alone, that it was part of a greater whole, and that, in order to achieve self-knowledge, it must contemplate its unrecognisable image in this mirror.[3]

It may be said that it was this relation between *gaze* [looking at 'self'/'other'] and *possession* [travelling/conquering; be it land or woman] which generated the theme of quest and proprietorship in English literature. What is interesting is the way in which the quest always led to "conquest." If one analyses the aspect of gaze on the landscape as embodying quest, search, possession, etc; then it is interesting to study its correspondence to Greenblatt's observation that according to the medieval concept of natural law, the uninhabited territories were automatically owned by the first person who discovered them or gazed at them (Payne 2005: 27).

The act of travelling, gazing and possessing alien lands was dwelt with a persisting obsession during the Elizabethan times.[4] Bassnett comments on

this phenomenon and its recurrence in literature thus: "By the sixteenth century, the wandering knight, on his eternal quest through the forests, was replaced in popular imagination by the seafarer, bringing back strange treasures from unknown lands beyond the horizon" (Mohanty 2003: 3).

The Augustans took up this theme with great enthusiasm. During this time Nature versus Culture/Country versus Town clashes took on unbelievable propositions. Probably, this debate was anticipative of the advent of the Industrial Revolution. Meanwhile, London became the hub of British civilization. It was the place where the politicians, high priests of art, artists and the literati assembled en masse, thus enriching the cultural ambience. It was the largest city, 'the happening place', the commercial centre and the seat of culture. At the same time it had its murky sides in its underbelly, which were inhabited by rogues, outcasts, pimps, prostitutes and crooks. The intelligentsia was deeply concerned over the moral degradation and deterioration of the city. "The city was a synecdoche for the political identity of the nation" (Hammond 2002: xxi). Hammond however adds:

> A long tradition of writing had associated towns with corruption and danger and the countryside with innocence and health.... The landscapes of England [were] often imagined via Roman landscapes, and so it becomes not only geographical but a conceptual space, a terrain where 'the happy man' (as tradition calls him) can become truly himself, free from the pressures of life at court or town (2002: xxi-xxii).

These deliberations were imaginatively worked out in the works of Marvell, Dryden, Swift, etc.[5] The emergence of novel as a new genre at this time has

been understood to be connected with the on going process of landscaping. This was also the time when the novel as a genre took its shape. Firdous Azim traces the birth of the novel, which is rooted in an imperialist heritage. He says that a novel creates a scenario, and defines a territory where the individual is posited in opposition to the 'other' subject position (1993: 29). In the new genre, according to Azim, the theme of colonialism is looked from different perspectives. In *Robinson Crusoe*, it is celebratory. The spirit of adventure, which would lead to the establishment of a colonial enterprise, is heavily lauded.

> The subject as a cast away by shipwreck (the typical Robinsonnade dream) into a luxuriant, but barren wilderness carries with him/her social and signifying structures in which s/he had been constructed as an individual. Seen in this light the first -person narratives describing far off places remain rooted with in the bounds of their own society, while desiring to flee and free themselves of social constraints. The oscillation between the society, and the unknown, and the subject, who is traversing between the two worlds, is the dominant theme [in the novels of those times] (1993: 29).

Nigel Leask elaborates on this further by stating that the anxieties of the suspension and the dislocation of a cultural sovereignty [of England] were witnessed more during the romantic times. "[A]s exemplified by Shelley's famous sonnet 'Ozymandias', Egypt [like India or Mexico] had a particular resonance for the romantic sensibility, attracted as [the sensibility] was to the antique, the picturesque and the exotic, even when…that attraction was qualified by political and moral critique of the past or present inhabitants of

antique lands"(2003: 3). Appleton analyses the English obsession with the exotic and natural landscapes as an attempt to escape from the gruelling realities of an institutional bondage brought in by the advent of industrialisation.[6]

With this knowledge, it is interesting to read the landscape poems of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley and Keats in a new light. During the Victorian and Edwardian times 'landscaping the Orient' became a recurring feature in English literature. Here, I am specifically limiting myself to the narration of the 'oriental landscapes'. It is also important to see this convergence as a significant one. As Said pointed out, the Orient had become a permanent fixture in the imagination of the West (1977:34). The Orient was a prevailing phenomenon, which appeared implicitly or otherwise. So when I figure out the obvious references I am in no way negating the not-so-obvious inferences to the Orient. I am, as a matter of fact, assuming that the prevalence of the Orient in the narratives of those times is very important and pertinent.

To sum up, if we look at the history of 'landscaping' in literature , we notice that at the time of the evolution of English literature, travel was a theme of the quest of the self that lay embedded in the violent struggle between the spiritual and the physical world. During the Renaissance, travel/adventure became one of the fashionable themes, and landscape became one of the inevitable prerequisites to describe the strange and exotic lands. From its sheer topographical and geographical functioning, it was during the Restoration and Augustan times that landscape paved way to the polemical drift of mapping one's own mental space: that is her/his associations with the

inside/outside, country/town dichotomies. It was at this juncture that scientific enquiry and the depiction of empirical facts became necessary preconditions to highlight the factual aspect of writing on 'strange' and unseen lands, which stood the risk of being regressively denigrated as both 'fictitious and fantastical'. The obsession with the Orient was in the background, lurking around with the intensity of a fantasy. The Romantics brought it back again with a renewed vigour, which exoticised strange and far-off lands seen and unseen. With the new found enthusiasm of describing landscapes and exotic far-away lands, slowly a new genre of travel writing was literarily unfurling with its immense possibilities during this time. During the Victorian times, after the Grand Tour,[7] travel writing became a distinct genre altogether.

We have seen how landscaping gradually developed in English literature providing a fertile ground for the flourishing of new genres like novel, travel writing, etc. At the same time, landscaping in English literature is also closely associated with the evolution of different movements in the aesthetics of vision that dominated Europe right from the time of Renaissance. In the literary procedure of landscaping, in travel narratives in particular, one has to keep in mind the aesthetics of landscaping that occurs in these narratives. Landscaping in travel writing is aimed at a target reader. So it has to be packaged in such a way as to arouse the curiosity of that reader. When one looks at the aesthetics of landscaping in literature, we can see that it was the outcome of the demand for veracity in experiential narratives. The travellers' tales were often spiced with the stories of the far-off and the unseen; these had to be authenticated with a credible, detailed narrative of what had been seen and heard. The seventeenth century explorer-cum-traveller tried to seek out

tools through which she/he could aesthetically represent a synchronized narrative based on observation and representation. Science was emerging as a discipline; it had based itself on empirical analysis and anything which did not substantiate itself with examples was looked upon with a certain amount of suspicion. This change in method, from an atavistic narration based on exaggeration to one based on 'objective reality', according to Stafford (1984: 12), was primarily the traveller-cum-explorer's attempts to ward off prevaricating tales with exaggerated metaphorical and allegorical narratives which had dogged the travel-tales till then. Therefore, it was necessary to dab travel-tales with the rosy hue of first-hand witness narratives added with generous helpings of truth telling. As a consequence, in the tales of exploration and discovery, truth-telling was elevated to an aesthetic status. It is also interesting to find that:

> …at some point in the seventeenth-century, a profound conviction was coherently voiced that something really is out there and that art and language were used to get beyond imitation - that is, beyond a hallowed art and language in order to grapple with the real things. This conscious rejection of certain established mental constructions became part of the larger Enlightenment struggle to avoid the conventionality of verbal and visual languages in pursuit of an unmediated nature (Poulsen 1992: 21).

Jay Appleton traces the aesthetic history of landscaping back to the works of Anthony Ashley Cooper, Third Earl of Shaftsbury (1671-1713). His important work *Characteristics, Men, Manners, Opinions, Times* (1711) reintroduced the concept of Longinus's Sublime to the English audience.

> Shaftesbury's importance …does not lie in his discussion of style, but in the fact that he was influential in transforming the idea of sublimity from a rhetorical to an aesthetic one. … Before Shaftesbury, the word 'Sublime' was used always in connection with style; after the appearance of *Characteristics*, it increasingly betokened a specific sort of feeling in the face of the awful and great.[8]

Thinkers like Addison and Kant expanded on his concept of Sublimity and eventually this became a central theme in eighteenth century aesthetics in Europe. Burke's essay, a detailed study of the concept, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757), had a deep influence on the English and it affected their thought and sensibility. This work was deeply thought out, well argued and had direct relevance to 'landscape', and here we can see Burke's neat division between the Beautiful and the Sublime. Sara Suleri connects Burke's conception of the 'idea' of the sublime to his obsession with the processes of imperialism that were taking shape in the British political front in her policies towards India. She believes that it was no historical accident that *The Enquiry* became the aesthetic paddle on which the question of India was addressed with implicit helpings of aesthetics. "[*The Enquiry*] provides in itself an incipient map of [Burke's] developing political consciousness: as a study of the psychic proximity of aesthetic discourse with the concomitant intimacy of cultural terror, [*The Enquiry*] converts the sublime into that theatrical space upon which he can most closely observe the emergence and disappearance that empowerment signifies to any discourse of control"(Suleri 1992: 37). Pramod K. Nayar, in his article "The Sublime Raj: English Writing and India, 1750-

1820", further elaborates on how the 18th century aesthetics of the sublime and the colonial ideology were intricately linked. In an interesting piece of rhetoric he brings out the various features of the sublime in landscaping which was practiced in the narratives of the Raj era. Nayar says:

> The aesthetics of the sublime, common to 18th century Europe, embodied terror and vastness, darkness and obscurity, danger and challenge.... The English traveller negotiates the threatening [Indian] landscape of desolation, characterized by emptiness, vastness, ruins, absence of markers, roads or cultivation or excessive natural phenomenon in the three moments: (a) the moment of self preservation in the face of threat from landscape, when the traveller describes a threatening landscape this 'negative sublime' where the landscape is devoid of markers or directions. The desolation frightens because there is no discernable meaning. (b) the moment of affirmation, of the 'hermeneutic sublime', where the attribution of meaning to the desolation by the English traveller asserts individual agency (c) finally, through acts of self affirmation, the traveller moves from solitude to society... (2004: 3811).

The consequence of Burke's theory of 'Sublime' was the conception of the 'Picturesque'. Uvedale Price, William Gilpin and Payne Knight brought in the cult of the Picturesque by deviating from Burke's idea of the Sublime and the Beautiful. The 'School of the Picturesque', as they were called, sought out the qualities of "roughness of texture, irregularity, asymmetry, partial concealment, and the unexpected and above all the impression... of natural occurrence rather than artificial contrivance" (Appleton 1996: 32). Though

theoreticians deem the controversies of the Beautiful, the Sublime and the Picturesque to be some random, stray ruminations recollected with rhetoric and passion, post-colonial studies by Suleri and Nayar specify that they dwell on the elusive realms of trying to harbour imperialistic impulses within the whole gamut of the aesthetics of landscaping.

During the Romantic period, the preoccupations with the notions of liberty and a genuine reaction against institutional authority [religious, social and academic] being the main features of the age, nature or the physical environment was considered as a constituent part of man's existence. Thus poets, philosophers and artists were constantly re-examining the paradoxical nexus between the restrictive structures of the society and the liberating features of nature found in the lakes, mountains, wooden glens, and rocky crags. Constable and Turner, the landscape painters of that time, gave visual expression to these concerns of the poets and the philosophers. "Constable revolutionized the attitude of the landscape painter towards the processes of converting observation into expression, while Turner discovered entirely new potentialities in the nature of colour and light" (Appleton 1996: 38). Other than the writers and the painters who tried to personify nature in their works, we do not find any major theorist till the latter half of the nineteenth century. But it is to be noted that landscape art emerged as a popular genre that attracted many patrons. It could also find for itself a major, prestigious and coveted space in the drawing rooms of that time.

John Ruskin, in his major work *Modern Painters* [published by Cook and Wedderburn in 1903], was the next major theoretician who dealt with the landscape in a modest fashion. Nevertheless, he made significant

contributions. Kenneth Clarke comments: “Ruskin approached art through nature. During the first half of his life he believed that nature - by which he meant the mountains, rocks, trees, plants, skies and rivers of Western Europe - was a direct revelation of God’s glory, designed for the edification of man…” (1964: 89). The Victorian dilemma of being torn between Science and Religion is addressed in this book; we can see Ruskin taking a Hopkinsian stance of the positing Nature as divine and blissful. What is peculiar to Ruskin was the fact that he was a theoretician/critic who himself was an artist.

In the twentieth century, we can find revolutionary studies in the aesthetics of landscape. Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud had revolutionized the aesthetics of landscape by bringing in environmental and psychological factors into it. John Dewey (1921)[9] and Gombrich (1960)[10] worked on the technical, symbolic and behavioural aspects of landscape. Simon Schama worked on ‘landscaping’ in literature. Barbara Maria Stafford, Richard Muir, James Turner and most importantly Jay Appleton worked on the history and politics of the aesthetics of landscape. Many art critics have analyzed the technical and symbolic inferences to the man-nature relationship etched out on canvas. The contributions of these critics in their entirety are overwhelmingly large, and would constitute another area of research altogether. I have cited only a few aestheticians of landscape art.

In this section we have seen how landscaping is associated with the development of new genres and determined the growth of a definitive aesthetics in English literature and art. However, most of the studies on the politics of landscaping have been from a purely male point of view. The questions of how men look at landscape and how they represent it in their

works have been studied extensively. Specific studies on how women perceive and depict landscape are scarce in the whole discourse on the aesthetics of landscaping altogether. My attempt is look these issues and probably formulate a handy theory on the 'landscaping' techniques of British women travel writers. The observations that I make are by no means generalisations on women travellers as a whole, and my theory is specific only to the texts that I have chosen for my study. And here it is important to say that, for this study, I have drawn heavily on the theory of 'gaze' from visual arts. It may be observed that the travellers I am working on seek out the 'beautiful' and the 'ugly' simultaneously, thus both reinforcing and disrupting already existing and neatly mapped out notions of visual aesthetics. However, it is worthwhile to mention that the narratives of women travellers open up a distinct chapter in the history of aesthetics.

The Power of visuality in travel writing

Landscaping is one of the most significant ways in which the power of visuality is imported to travel writing. It is the technique in which a written form appeals to the reader's 'optical feelings'. By optical feelings, I mean, the visual sensation that is gauged by a sort of spatial awareness and experience. I have used the term 'optical feelings' deliberately to imply the association between the act of seeing and the corresponding thought process which ensues almost simultaneously. But when an author narrates landscape, the bearing of the visual experience is foregrounded by sustaining the spontaneity and the impact of the mental picture, though this process often occurs in a different time and space.

I shall be dealing, primarily, with landscape as a text in the writings of women travellers who present their imaging/imaginings of India in literature. In their texts, landscape in itself becomes a technique through which the 'eye witness account' is peppered with participatory narratives. These participatory narratives, which try to assess and represent the data of observation, emphasize the authority of 'experience'. Here is where the question of the female gaze presents itself in the texts of women travellers.

According to John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*, women are accustomed to being the object of male regard; however they do not return the gaze in order to transform men into objects of desire. Instead they internalise the male point of view and become self-surveyors even when they are looking from their subject position. "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at... The surveyor of woman in herself is male: the surveyed female" (Berger 1972:47). Laura Mulvey, in the context of cinema, in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", argues that women are controlled in films by having to act for men as sexual spectacles. "Woman ...stands in patriarchal culture as a signifier for the male other, bound by a symbolic order in which man can live out of his fantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of the woman still tied to her place as a bearer, not maker, of meaning" (2000: 35).[11] According to her, female subjects thus become the passive raw material for the active gaze of man. Rey Chow quotes Fredric Jameson and his contribution to the theory of gaze in his essay "Where Have All the Natives gone?"

> In his volume of essays exploring film culture Fredric Jameson writes that "The visual is *essentially* pornographic" [...] This straight forward

> definition of the visual image sums up many of the problems we encounter in cultural criticism today [...] The activity of watching is linked by the projection of physical nakedness. Watching is theoretically defined as the primary agency of violence, an act that pierces the other, who inhabits the place of the passive victim on display (Mongia 2006: 123).[12]

Teresa de Lauretis contests Berger, Jameson and Mulvey by articulating the dual dimensions of being objectified and identified by gaze: "for women spectators ... we cannot assume identification to be simple. For one thing identification is itself a movement, a subject process, a relation: the identification (of oneself) with something other (than oneself)." (Lauretis 1984: 141). Felber further exemplifies Lauretis's view in "Capturing the Shadows of Ghosts: Mixed Media and the Female Gaze." She says, "significantly the female image experiences identity and difference, discovery of the self and the other. Unlike the dyad of the male gaze/female spectacle, it produces identity (sameness) and a slighter extent of difference" (Felber 2001: 28). Richard Leppert in his *Art and the Committed Eye* (2002) observes that the object objectified is not as passive as it is assumed to be. The object in an artistic piece, be it a painting or a movie, wields a certain amount of power over the spectator. Though the distribution of power is not equal, there is a considerable amount of 'titillating' the desire and 'frustrating it' going on behind the scenes. The spectator emerges as the not so powerful 'possessor' of the image in the whole show. These theoretical debates revolve around the realm of the male gaze and the objectified position of women in visual arts. Again very few theories exist which talks about the agential position of women

as the originator of meanings in the realm of visuality and the translation of it. In the texts that I am working on, I am dealing with the agency of the gaze of the travelling women. At this point it is necessary to lay down my own premises on the basis of a thorough analysis of my primary sources. The main premises are; as women travel and observe the place and they try to reproduce the visual impressions imprinted in their mind through their memory:

1. The linguistic medium helps them to articulate their memory. Words try to substitute the mental images relived through memory.
2. The visual image caught in a moment in time has a problematic relationship with the words [or the linguistic medium], which would later describe the spectacle witnessed.
3. The gaze is a self-conscious one as well as it is directed towards a self-conscious object. Here while we get into the skin of the 'spontaneity' of the act of gazing or being gazed at, one can notice the power that the subject as well as the object wields on each other.
4. The gaze also tries to translate 'nature' [the things that really are] to 'culture' [things that are made].
5. The pleasure of looking or gazing [scopophilia] is another aspect of gaze that calls for our rapt attention.
6. The emotion behind the gaze is all-important, is it as simplistic as the white/traveller/writer trying to 'possess' the land that she is gazing at? Is the gaze proprietary in nature? Or is the gaze ridden with the complexities of a cultural encounter?

7. Is there a distinct difference between the male and the female gaze or is the female gaze an extension of the male gaze? Or are these narratives a compromise of both?

In gazing and the consequent experiential disbursement of data, the balance between objectivity and the representation of it becomes delicate. Hence, in these travel narratives that I am working on, storytelling is adorned with the representation of space as a visual and emotional experience with an astounding clarity. The recognition and the familiarisation of a given space begin right from the time of one's identity formation. Greebie, a critic who had worked extensively on spaces, says, spatial awareness is acquired "much earlier than speech…Furthermore, we respond to space as a totality, from many directions simultaneously, in what the psychologists call a gestalt experience" (1981: 43).[13] Greenbie further elaborates on the 'inside' /'outside' spaces.

> The transition between the inside and the outside of the home envelope the 'here' and 'there' polarity that governs all relationships. This occurs first in relation of the rooms of the house, and then terms of the house to yard, yard to street space, and street to neighbourhood and so on. These establish the boundaries or extension of 'skin' between us and the material environment (1981: 7).

In this dissertation, gaze is all about experiencing the visual phenomenon from 'outside' and representing it from 'inside' or within. When we theorize landscaping [which constitutes witnessing (visually), experiencing (emotionally and intellectually), and expressing verbally (in print)] we can

find a harmonious blending of the three-fold dimension of this phenomenon. At this point it is interesting to look at Muir's elaboration on the traveller's encounter with the disparate spaces of the 'insides' and 'outsides.'

> In experiencing places, we simultaneously encounter two closely related but different landscapes. The one lying beneath our feet and extending to the far horizon is a real landscape: it is composed of rock, soil, vegetation, and water and is home to an abundance of creatures and has its objective past and present existences. The other is the Perceived landscape, consisting of sensed and remembered accounts and hypotheses about the real landscape (Muir 1999: 115).

After examining the concept of the gaze it is important to understand 'space' in its conceptual form. Space in itself becomes a complex phenomenon as the entire psychological gamut of the author's 'self' is deftly, yet unconsciously fleshed out within the twin concepts of the 'inside' and the 'outside'. In travelling we can see the uneasy merger of the 'inside' and 'outside' spaces. Inside space can be conveniently called 'home', the familiar environment the traveller associates herself with. It is here, the early development of identity formations take place. The concept of 'home' does not merely have the restricted meaning of a man-made space that protects; it can be extended to the entire ethos and institutions which help the 'self' to evolve as individuals within a given community. Thus 'home' carries with it, markers of the evolution and construction of human beings within specific communities they belong to. While analysing the meaning of 'home', we can see the familiar spaces, climates, food habits, customs, racial features, etc become part and parcel of this notion. Thus home becomes a sensuous, emotional and familiar

geographical space. Anything that is antithetical, new and strange to this familiarity is what is considered to be the 'outside'. Thus, alien lands and all the features that go with it, right from strange spaces to people and customs fall into the notion of 'outside' or 'abroad'.

> The concept of 'home' becomes the symbol of the *self* or *inside* and the 'self' has no meaning in its entirety but in contrast to the 'outside'.[14] Travel Writing generally evolves through this complex mediation of the 'self' and the 'other'.

The perception of the 'outside' and the verbal construction of it in the texts that I am dealing with, are also synonymous with that of the mapping of the psyche of women travellers. Travel in itself or mobility in terms of time and space, can be understood as explorations of one's own self almost verging on epiphanies**.** Thus, the texts I am working on become a sort of 'bildungsroman', in its generic sense, leading to the merging of the physical and the psychic, the 'inside' and the 'outside'; the 'self' and the 'other'.

Karen A. Lawrence opines that the women travellers/writers had actually disrupted the given concept of the 'self' and the 'other' within the convention of [male] travelling/writing. She says that with in the Western tropes of travelling, the image of women had either been as a cistern of fidelity anxiously waiting at home for the return of her travelling husband; or that of the Circe, the potentially dangerous woman who had to be tamed and physically conquered (Lawrence 1994: xiii).

Travelling becomes a journey in time, as the spatial displacement becomes synonymous with temporal displacement as well. At the outset travel, within

different time zones becomes a mental sojourn in different historical periods as well; especially when one is travelling 'outside Europe/England'. Travelling to India becomes equivalent to travelling to a colonial past, thus confronting colonial vestiges as well as 'wastages'. Thus the 'outside Europe/England' experience, in fact, transforms into a rendezvous with the past of Europe/ England itself: if not its colonial, the paradisiacal one, which is at once imaginary and ideal. India, therefore, becomes the perfect ground for realizing and imagining both the polarities and paradoxes of the past: which is rooted in the colonial as well as paradisiacal concepts of time. The quest of the paradisiacal is closely linked with the 'orientalisation' of the 'former colony,' which explains those instances of the quest of pristine beauty and innocence within the Indian landscape. The disappointments with India, India's modernisation in particular, which is sandwiched between tradition and time, can also be well explained by this phenomenon. Having introduced the various layers of landscape as a concept in travel writing, the discussion will now move on to the analysis of landscaping in Murphy. In this chapter, I shall be using Gillian Tindall to a certain extent, to explicate the idea of Place Fixation.

I

Narration of Spaces, Cityscapes, Ruralscapes and Bodyscapes: Murphy's On a Shoestring to Coorg

Dervla Murphy's *On a Shoestring to Coorg: An Experience of Southern India*, published in 1976, is a guide book and travel account. Here the narration of the landscape becomes an indicator of the travails of one's own act of

travelling. For example, 'Introductions' or 'Prefaces' in the travel narrative have voluminous descriptions about the landscape, used as a device to introduce Indian topography to the target reader. If we take the example of maps, we can see that maps have a significant role in travel literature; invariably almost every travel narrative begins with a map of the place the writer is going to speak about.

Murphy provides two maps as graphic introductions to India (Fig.1). The main focus is on the southern peninsula of India with an emphasis on the western part with the names of the major places in that area which she has visited. This area covers portions of coastal strip of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and parts of South-western Tamilnadu. Andhra Pradesh is not mentioned at all though Murphy claims, in her title, this sojourn to be her experience of 'South India'. The topography is neatly etched out with a detailed layout of the Western Ghats and the various rivers that criss-cross the South-western tip of India. Here, she foregrounds the territory of Coorg, on which she zeros in as the pivotal region from which she tries to trace out the quintessence of India. In the inset, the 'complete' map of India is projected which, interestingly, has Pakistan and Bangladesh, included in it. Severed from the Indian sub-continent is the map of Sri Lanka, as an inseparable feature of India. Interestingly they are not labelled as separate countries, but they are included within the geographical frontiers of India.

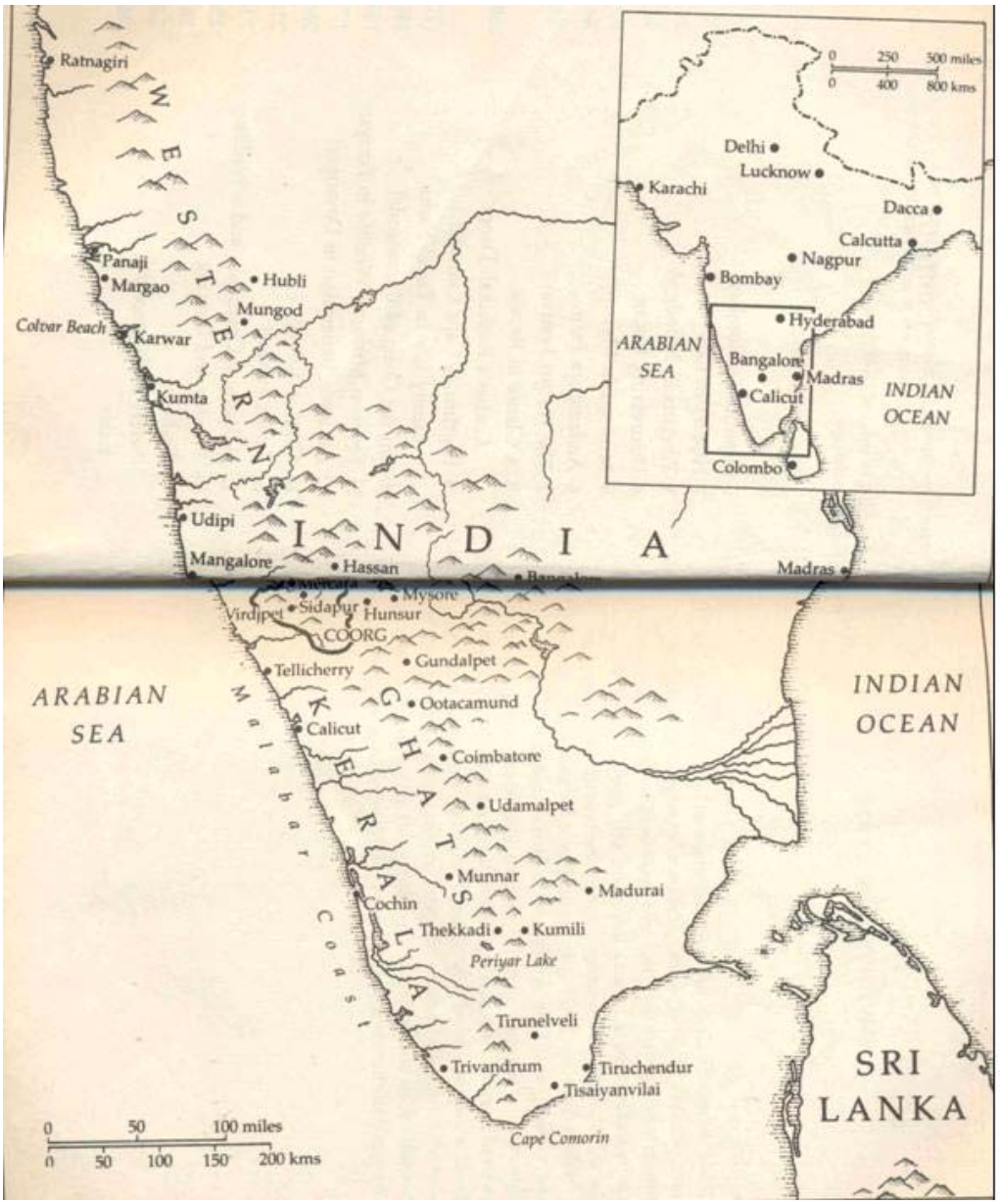

Figure 1: Murphy's map of South India

From this particular observation, the surmises that would naturally arise are

1. By the employment of the cartography the author tends to create an unproblematic relationship of the map with that of the region that is narrated. The map of India in any travel book is intended to reflect the mirror image of India.
2. The cartographic details presented by Murphy, present the ambiguous stance taken by her in bundling off of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, as a homogenous space, which elaborates the sub continent as a holistic region. This, according to John Pickles, is an instance of "the manipulation of spatial data" (1992: 230). This 'complete' map of India incidentally coincides with that of the pre-partition Raj territory. Incidentally, what the author rakes up through maps are the nostalgic memories of the past in the very first instance. It may be assumed that Murphy has a target reader in her mind, who is probably white [or to be more specific, British].

One can also speculate the authors' perception of the cartography of India as a homogenised and civilizational whole. Though it can never be deemed as an offence, one also wonders if it had been the authors' haphazard way of using the readily available map of India that treats the sub continent as a holistic political entity.

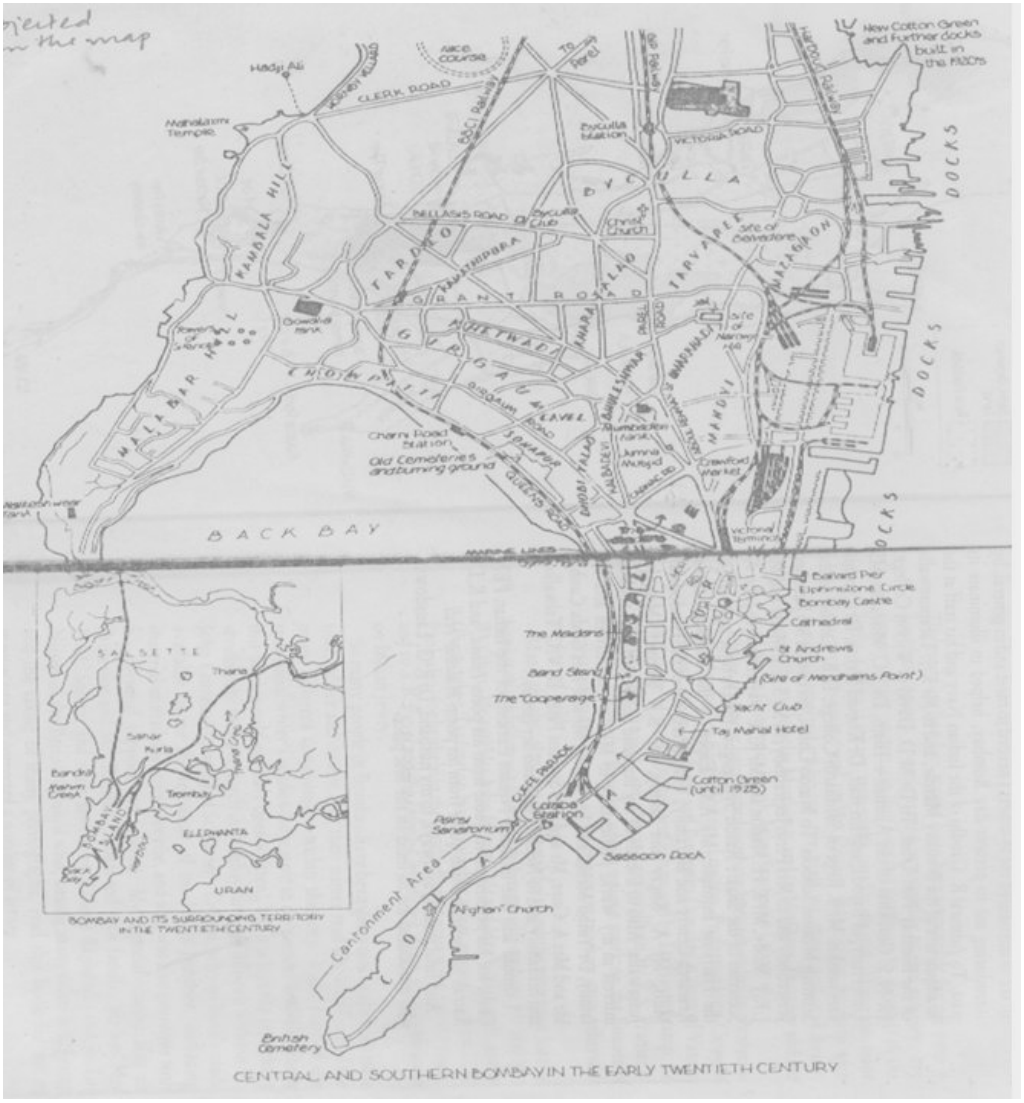

Figure 2: Map of Bombay, British

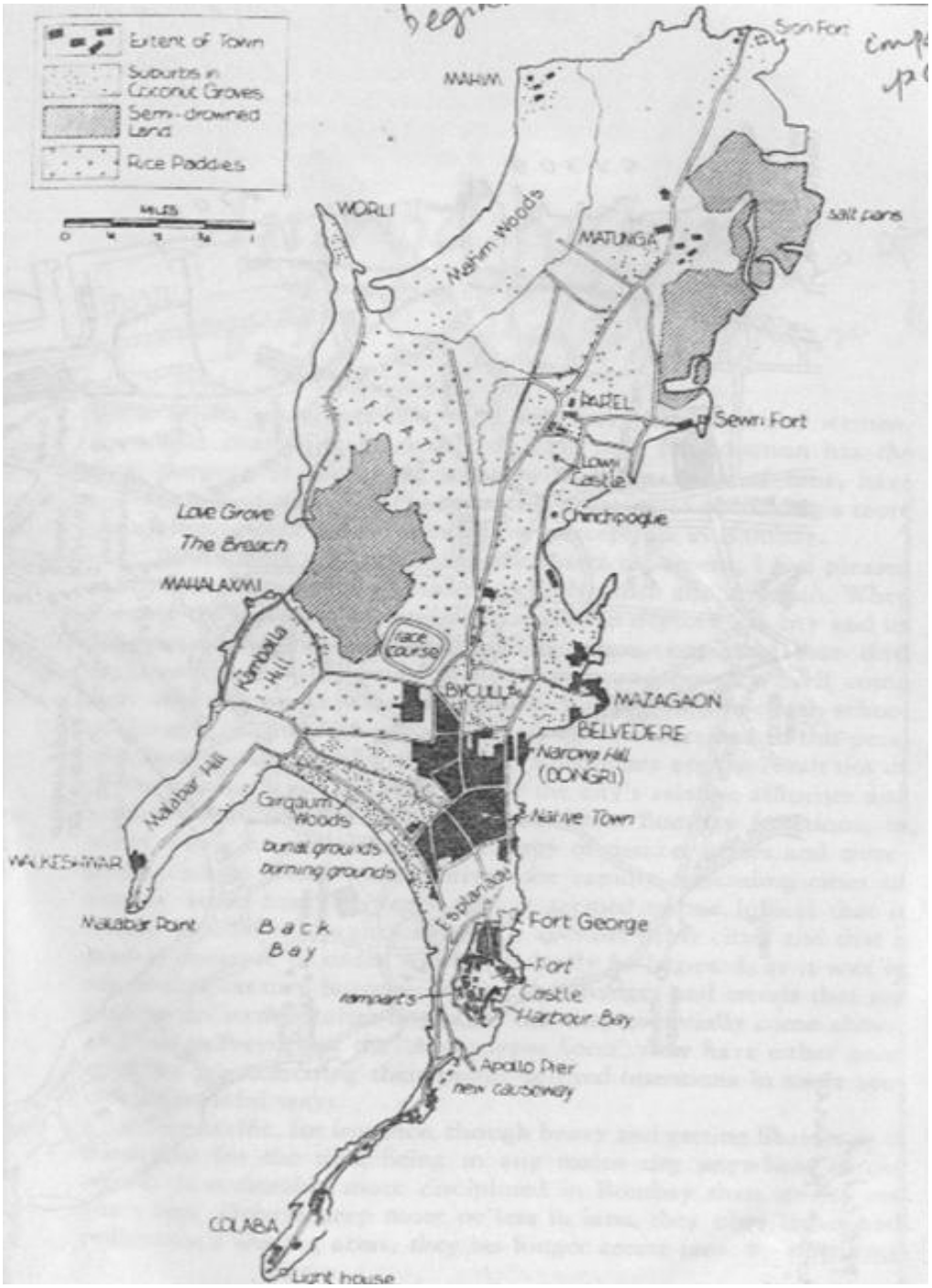

Figure 3: Map of Bombay Before British Annexure

In the case of Tindall's *City of Gold*, we can see her illustrating the map of a specific place in India. In this text, Gillian Tindall gives the topographical description of each and every place in Bombay, like the extent of the town, suburbs and coconut groves, semi drowned land, rice paddles, etc. We also find that one of the maps of Bombay is that of the early nineteenth century and simultaneously the author illustrates the map of the early twentieth century Central and Southern Bombay in the next page (See Fig 2 and 3). The latter gives us the picture of Bombay which is closer to our knowledge of it today with more inhabited spaces and roads criss-crossing its vastness like tendons of modern life. A much developed railway line is also seen in the picture. We can also locate docks, clubs and hotels. The author does not write anything about these maps directly, but it is interesting to note that both the maps belong to the pre-independent period of Bombay's history, though the traveller-historian writes about Bombay in 1984. It may not be a sheer coincidence to find that those two maps of Bombay belong to the Raj period. Nor is it incidental not to find any trace of contemporeinity in Tindall's cartography. Another interesting fact is that these two maps tell us the tale of the transition of Bombay from a small marshy piece of land [as the British found it when they took over Bombay's administration from the Portuguese] in early nineteenth century to that of a well-developed city with a much sophisticated infrastructure in early twentieth century. Incidentally these maps are emblematic of the British rule, and in the beginning of the twentieth century it was at its zenith.

Place Fixation in Landscaping

In this dissertation, I have used a term called Place Fixation to indicate a particular feature which is latent in all the travel texts that I am working on. Place fixation in the texts that I am dealing with takes place at two levels. In the first level, it is a process of zeroing in on a particular country as a traveller. This particular bearing in the first level of Place Fixation is a process of 'selection' of the country the author intends to travel. At this level the author elaborates on the various processes through which she passes to omit certain other places she has had access to.

Characteristics of place fixation

1. Zeroing in on a particular country.
2. Careful selection of a particular region in that country.
3. The dramatic narration of the entry into the place, which, in most cases, is lesser known to the outside world, to be more precise, to Western readers.

Place Fixation happens through landscaping, "bodyscaping", the photographic narration of events, anecdotes, the narratives of 'witnessing' which propel the customs, the rites, the ceremonies, etc of the place into our focus. It is aided by source books, which replenish the author's prior information about the place. However, the role of landscape in place fixation is my sole concern in this chapter. The other aspects shall be taken up for analysis eventually.

Dervla Murphy, who is a travel writer by profession, elaborates on her sojourn in India in her book *On a Shoestring to Coorg*. She travelled to India in August 1973. She tells us that it was five years since she had been outside Europe and she describes her zest for travel and writing as inextricably one and the same in a

metaphorical way: she calls it the "itching of the pen and the feet" (OASC: 1). Thus, right at the beginning, she discloses the fact that travel is a physical as well as intellectual/emotional activity for her. These tropes relating to the physical as well as the creative realms of travel are seen throughout the writings of women travellers. They see the dual potential of travel as exciting both at the physical and mental level. In the very introduction itself, we are told of the process of Place Fixation that happens and Murphy highlights the fact the she has chosen the little known place called Coorg as the focus of her writing on India. According to Murphy, embarking on a journey to India needs oodles of mental energy rather than physical stamina. In the convoluted meanderings typical of a traveller, Murphy gets into the thick of the matter by subtly suggesting the difficulties one has to face in India.

In her 'Prologue' she tells us about the various choices that she had been given and why and how ultimately she had chosen the place called Coorg. Here, she gives a glimpse of the fact of Murphy being a professional travel writer. She speaks about the various channels of exploration that were open to her. China, Australia, Kuala Lumpur, Mexico, etc were other places that tempted Murphy's travelling instinct. This is one of the processes of Place Fixation where the reader is given a glimpse into the very many choices of the author and her dramatic way of narrating why she selects a particular place. This circumspect manner of 'Place Fixation' is closely connected with 'fixing' or focussing the reader's mind on that particular place which shall be explored by the author through her narration. Initially, the phenomenon of Place Fixing is all about the scattered choices of travel and the author's discretion or the process of diligent selection that she makes.

Here the traveller/author also speaks at length about the emotional conviction and the appeal that India as a country has: “I recognised it at once, though some years had passed since I last felt it. It was an excitement amounting to intoxication, a surging impatience that quickened my pulse. It was a delicious restlessness, a stirring of the imagination, a longing of the heart, the thirst of the spirit” (OASC: 2). But this ‘effervescence’ of feelings apparently comes with an ambiguous mix of the author’s apprehensions of Hindu life. Here she speaks of her previous acquaintance with India as well as the limitations to her admiring the country whole-heartedly. “Far from having fallen in love with India during previous visits I had been repelled by some aspects of Hindu life, irritated by other, uneasily baffled by most and consciously attracted by very few” (OASC: 3). Murphy goes on her self-examining spree of trying to find out why her destination is India. She rules out the spiritual side, the physical comforts and even the aesthetic comforts that a place like India can offer. “I had no quasi mystical ambition to improve my soul by contact with Hindu spirituality, nor had I forgotten the grim details of every day Indian life - the dehumanising poverty, the often deliberately maimed beggars, the prevaricating petty officials, the heat, the flies, the dust, the stinks, the pilfering” (OASC: 3). This is an exposition or introduction to India from a experiential point of view of the traveller. On the one side there is this unpleasantness, which is revolting to a European; whereas on the other hand, these disturbing details are in turn aestheticised. She simultaneously presents the idea of India as ‘evasive’, full of “complexities, subtleties, secrets, enigmas, paradoxes, unpredictability and apparent chaos” (OASC: 3). She further adds that the rationalistic, artificial masks of apparent smooth functioning, straightforwardness and dependability are absent in an enigmatic place like India. In the expositional prologue itself, we can see Murphy

presenting the ambiguity of perceiving India as a terrain, which accommodates the dual propensities of attraction and repulsion. She states that she is attracted to the enigma and the evasive secrets of Indian life and as she shares her concerns about India with the readers, she is compelling their minds to share the same enigmatic attractions that India offers. Therefore, she offers India in a platter as a labyrinthine puzzle to be unravelled and she narrates with suspense that she would be unfurling these secrets to the readers. In this narrative strategy, Murphy tries to bridge the gap between the reader and herself as well as the distance and time. The traveller/writer thus sets the stage ready for the drama of exploration.

She tells us in the 'Prologue' about her apprehension of travelling with a child. Here, she confronts her first hazard as a woman traveller with a child. "...I decided this was the moment...to share with my daughter Rachel the stimulation of a non-European journey. Already she had twice proved, on European testing grounds, that she could enjoy short bouts of travelling rough: but I did realize that no 5-year old could be expected to proceed as speedily as my faithful bicycle or as sturdily as my Ethiopian mule" (OASC: 1). Here, we are told by Murphy, in so many words about the ordeal of travel and the physical necessity to prune her daughter to be fit for the expedition through an "apprenticeship to serious travelling" (OASC: 4). Another three fold challenge raised by India is the one posed by trying to balance a successful fusion of three roles; of a mother, writer and a traveller.

It is here, at this interesting climax that she speaks about her chance wandering and her *coeur d'affaire* with Coorg. Coorg materialises towards the middle of Murphy's search, and becomes central to her being in her brief stay in India. Before mentioning Coorg, Murphy, in the typical perambulating manner of a

traveller, narrates her experiences in Bombay where she embarks first. She is, in fact, familiar with Bombay, though Indian cities with their myriad puzzles still bewilders her Western sensibility. Throughout, she is in search of the meaning of these puzzles and is trying to rationally find an answer in her search. Murphy tells us about the 'discovery' of Coorg through her personal and professional experience as a traveller. She lays before us the myriad choices of places that she had, as a traveller, before her as well as her meanderings in India to Bombay, Goa and Kerala before accidentally tripping on Coorg.

Gillian Tindall adopts the same approach in her book, *City of Gold*, opens with the narrative strategy which is seemingly matter of fact, yet the three quotations with which she begins the texts are imbued with the author's deliberate attempts at Place Fixation. Tindall quotes from Samuel Pepys's *Diary*, William Hickey and Sheikh Sadee. The first quotation explicitly captures Pepys's astonishment at beholding the wealth of an Indian vessel and his awe at witnessing the opulent abundance.[15] Hickey speaks about the East Indies as the 'receptacle' and succour to 'abandoned' and 'undone' men.[16] This welcoming warmth of India is reflected in Sheikh Sadee's appreciation of the monumental edifices of civilisation of the place [probably Bombay] as well as the immortality of the architect who constructed it.[17] Through these accolades, Tindall tries to highlight the mercantile wealth as well as the artistic opulence of the place she is going to historicise. This is neatly done with the help of quotations from various travellers. She conjures up the ghost of the past through the present. She nevertheless evokes curiosity in the readers about the place, that is, the 'city of gold' that she is going to narrate. Thus, Tindall fixes the place in a straight forward and factual manner without any convoluted peregrinations.

Cityscapes

In the first chapter, 'Initiation in Bombay,' Murphy's gaze falls on "scores of waiting taxiwallahs" (OASC: 6), which at once speaks about the collectivising phenomenon in that gaze. The gaze also extends to that of the scatological details of an average Indian with an emphatic voyeuristic relish as Murphy describes the early morning sights of India. "On flat stretches of waste land dozens of men were performing their morning duty, unconsciously squatting with rusty tins of water to hand and some times a hopeful pig in the background. The Hindu opening his bowels must be the world's greatest mass infestation of ostrich mentality. Your average Hindu is an extremely modest man, but his gaze fixed on the ground, he will serenely evacuate while hundreds of people pass to and fro nearby" (OASC: 7). In this sweeping statement Murphy tells us that an average Indian [whom she automatically calls a Hindu] has an Ostrich mentality of consciously averting the gaze, or ignoring it, or perhaps he is unaware of it by becoming a passive agent of the gaze that is directed to him. She gives a graphic description of Bombay as she narrates with the supportive statement of her five-year-old daughter that every thing looks 'scattered':

> ...or with the bougainvillea gloriously flourishing on the one side of the high way and the stench of fresh excrement drifting to us from the other. All around were uncountable thousands of homes - many not bigger than small tents - constructed of bamboo matting or driftwood, or beaten kerosene tins. Between and in these shelters people seethed like so many ants, and diseased pi-dogs nosed through stinking muck, and shrivelled looking cattle were being driven on to the dusty, grey-green waste land to eat Shiva-alone-knows- what (OASC: 9).

With deliberate Indianizations like "Shiva-alone-knows-what" and "Kali-alone-knows-what", Murphy brings in the desired effect of irony. Here the images of the crowd, the shambles, the bougainvillea, reeking odour and garbage are cluttered together to bring in the utter devastation of a "grey-green waste land" (OASC: 9).

In the enunciation of stink, muck, wastelands, shabbiness and the directionless crowd, Murphy evokes a landscape of barrenness and desolation.

The urban landscapes or the cityscapes are juxtaposed with the poetic qualities of the rustic life so as render a striking contrast with that of the filthy sliminess of industrialization and modernization. She goes to the extent of saying that while looking at India's least attractive urban-slum aspect, she felt affectionate. Through out we can see the White condescension smiling beatifically at witnessing India's strange paradoxes. "A cool breeze freshened the windowless bus as we slowly jolted through mile after mile of slums, semi slums and swarming bazaars. Rachel was fascinated to see banana on trees, cows lying on the city pavements and a crow boldly swooping down to steal a piece of toast off the street vendor's stall" (OASC: 9).

Bodyscapes

In "bodyscaping" we can find Murphy's description of abysmal poverty in Bombay that is delineated through the description of a collection of human bodies. Here we can also notice Murphy's descriptiveness in the delineation of malfunctioning, handicapped and poverty stricken anorexic bodies in a grotesque graphic. "Outside one sagging bamboo shelter at the edge of the road a graceful dark skinned young woman was washing her feet, using water

taken from a stagnant, reeking pond with a lid of bright green scum, she looked up as we passed, and met my eyes and smiled at us: and her smile had a quality rarely found in modern Europe" (OASC: 9). Again the smile of the poverty stricken is exoticised as an unselfconscious, pristine one, which cannot be found in Europe. Here, it will be relevant to quote Gunter Grass (2001), who described this phenomenon as the "vexing smile of poverty".[18]

While graphically projecting the picture of stark poverty in India through "bodyscaping", Murphy is overcome by the burden of her Western sensibility as she deplores the futility of her actions of generosity in the face enormous suffering, misery, etc. Here she says that the real witnessing and confrontation of poverty is much more ravaging than the imaginative concept of it. She says that one cannot be detached while facing this kind of poverty. She narrates her experience of poverty with the help of "bodyscaping".

> Men with no legs and/ or no arms were heaped in corners or somehow propelling themselves along pavements; lepers waved their stumps in our faces or indicated areas where their noses had been, deformed children frantically pleaded for paise and hung on my ankles so that, as I tried to move away, their feather weight bodies were dragged along the ground; perfectly formed children … sat slumped against the walls or lay motionless in gutters, too far beyond hope even to beg. One pot bellied, naked toddler stood alone, leaning against the pillar of a shopping arcade with a terrible expression of resignation, and mature awareness of misery, on his pinched, mucus-streaked face…an ancient, armless man, wearing only a token loin cloth and head moving all time slightly to and fro like a mechanical toy, and his hardened sightless eye

balls rolling grotesquely (OASC: 11).

Here, the traveller wallows on the grotesqueness of narrating bodies with a voyeuristic obsession. Here is also a narcissistic contemplation of one's own superiority as a cultural ambassador, all knowing and empathetic to Indian miseries and situations found in these observations. She feels the weight and burden of her own being, while coming into contact with 'feather-weight bodies' and the deformities of beggars point to her being as a complete, privileged whole. She is also weighed down by this traveller's guilt due to voyeuristic witnessing. Nonetheless, we can observe the nightmarish display of poverty stricken bodies in Bombay as Murphy's indictment of India as a disjuctured place caught in the nefarious web of Westernisation and modernization.

In "bodyscaping", it is generally the movement of the body or the lack of it that is graphically depicted. Bodies display a variety of propensities to attract the roving gaze of the traveller. This is depicted in the narration of collective bodies and single ones. If it is grace, agility and spontaneity of the physique and emotions that the rural folk display, the urban folk emote through their subtle momentous gestures, mostly bordering on strained and artificial manoeuvres. Rural bodies and urban bodies are set at a striking contrast so as to project the various subtle dimensions of the nature/culture conflict, which can be seen in travel writings in general and writings on India in particular.

Nevertheless, landscape and bodyscape are mixed together in an aesthetic palette of colours that both become indistinguishable and inextricable from each other. In Goa, Murphy gazes at the local fisherfolk and sizes them up.

They are portrayed as self-conscious of the gaze and they are reticent to Murphy's openness which invited contact. With Rachel, they are least self conscious, and Murphy picturises them as tall, well-proportioned human beings and on top of that an exotic description of their costumes is handed down in a metaphorical platter which, ranges from sparse to exotic ["The gay blouses and the swirling skirts"]. Their grace and the colourful feast they provide Murphy, the enchanted beholder, according to her, cancels all the ugliness of industrialization and modernization which are 'anathemas' to cities like Bombay ["India's westernisation seems to me very superficial: though that is another too sweeping generalization…" (OASC: 49)] She goes ahead further:

> The local fisher folk - whose boats and nets are strewn all over the beach-seem very, very shy though willing to be friendly with Rachel. They are almost black skinned, quite tall and beautifully proportioned. (Good advertisements for a fish and coconut diet.) The women wear gay blouses and swirling skirts, the men only a codpiece attached to a string around their waist. …It delighted me to watch these men – all grace, strength and skill - performing the ritual unchanged for millennia (OASC: 23).

In this instance of the female gaze falling on bodies, to be more precisely male bodies, we can find a measuring, erotic lingering on the perfection of the body in movement, or in performance. The male perfection of figure is in contrast with the colourfulness of women, and Murphy watches the display of strength, grace and skill with a scopophilic eye. In a kaleidoscopic recollection, Murphy smudges the differences between the landscape and the bodyscape as she

gazes at the nimble footed fisherwomen almost mingling with the sea waves with a natural concordance and yet becoming distinct due to their colourfulness. "...I saw a line of five young women walking at the edge of the waves, balancing enormous wicker-baskets on their heads. They moved with a marvellous grace and against a turquoise sea the full-skirted gowns - orange, blue, pink, yellow, red, green, mauve - billowed and glowed brilliantly" (OASC: 25).

"Bodyscaping" is a phenomenon through which a complete identification of the bodies with the surrounding landscape is dexterously visualised. The geographical topography as well as the human body maps are intermittently blended in the self-same canvas thus etching out harmony and discord. In "bodyscaping", as we can observe in landscaping, there is the subtle prevalence of a foreboding or the conjuring up of fear from the unknown recesses of mind that is clearly perceptive. Murphy narrates the way in which Rachel had been scared by the sight of moplah women in burkhas. Here Murphy describes these women as cadaverous, shrouded figures moving about swiftly and silently perpetrating their 'evil presence'.

> Rachel was a little scared to see several groups of moplak women in silken *burkhas* ... One can understand how these completely shrouded figures, moving about so swiftly and silently on their dusty slippers - though apparently unable to see - could make the child faintly uneasy (OASC: 49).

By defending the child's position, Murphy also voices her sense of foreboding while witnessing strange and inaccessible bodies. In these instances, we can

find the traveller being unable to establish any contact with the bodies which are distant or hidden from her sight. This inapproachability and inaccessibility are deemed as sinister and uncanny, as the traveller is denied entrée to the 'all-knowing' gaze.

Cityscapes, Countryscapes and Place Fixation

Through instances of cityscaping, Murphy reveals a colourful picture of India. The chromatic patterns and the visual sensations also collapse into a maze of colourful sensations. The art of creating visual hyperboles through verbal images is an interesting phenomenon as one analyses the traveller's gaze.

> The narrow streets of the Ville Parle bazaar were lit by a golden glow from hundreds of oil lamps hanging over stalls heaped with every sort of merchandise: bales of shining silks and vividly patterned cottons, stacks of gleaming copper pots and stainless steel ware, round towers of glittering glass bangles, pyramids of repulsively Technicoloured sweet meats, acres of fresh fruits and vegetables, mountains of coconuts, molehills of cashew nuts, hillocks of melons, forests of sugarcane and gracefully overflowing baskets of jasmine blossom. … (Foul gutters and festering sores, jasmines and incense: India in a nutshell?) (OASC: 11-2).

Murphy's observations on the rural landscapes always embark on the unchangeability of the rural landscape. While disembarking on Goa, which is her destination after Bombay, she articulates her own desire for a perfect landscape. She describes the Colva beach as everyman's dream of a tropical paradise.

Murphy's all-encompassing gaze on nature and landscape covers the human bodies as participatory of nature and not as separate entities. In these narratives of landscape there is a blending of nature and human bodies and these human bodies are invariably the 'lower class', the 'aboriginals', the fisher folk, etc. They are marked as part and parcel of nature and are held as ineffaceable from the pristine, paradisiacal beauty of nature. Nevertheless she perceives the middle class Indians, officers, land lords, journalists, etc as separate from nature. They never blend and they are described as aberrations in the natural landscape of India. They belong to the urban cityscapes, which are harmful and jarring to the existence of India. They belong to the tattered landscapes of the cities and they are mentioned as corrupting, ugly and disgusting: the adjectives she uses in cityscapes as well.

She also finds the 'half-educated', middle class Indians as repulsive. She finds India's transit to industrialized modernity from a 'violated' pristine nature of the 'real' or 'authentic' India as revolting. The signs of these industrial, modernistic 'violations' are quite unpalatable to Murphy. At this point, through comparisons and contrasts, the author sets two idealized target notions of the landscape. One is the landscape that is mentally compared with that of the landscape and the cityscapes of home. The well-ordered structures of capitalistic Europe that she is used to and the other one is that of the nostalgic reminisces of the European countryside, which is again, harmonious, orderly and neatly comprehensible to the eye as well as the mind. The second kind of ideal landscape that emerges out of her narratives is that of the inviolate, pristine and 'pure' ruralscape of India, which embraces plenty of colonial nostalgia with it. This kind of ideal landscape which India can be

effectively packaged into carries with it the “freedom form abominable effects of industrialization, the consumer society and internal combustion engine” (OASC: 41). The landscape that she was searching for in her mind had probably fitted in perfectly with that of Coorg, in South India. Before embarking on Coorg, she meets with the prelude to such an ideal abode in Mysore. Murphy finds Mysore attractive though she states that it has deteriorated since the British left. What draws Murphy to Mysore is its old, colonial beauty. Mysore serves as a disjunctive space between the independent India and the colonial Raj. In this very space, the nostalgia for the Raj as well as the technological present of India are closely enmeshed. She admires the old world beauty in Mysore as she looks at the remnants of feudal life in Mysore. “The feudal past looks good in Mysore” (OASC: 69).

In the chapter “Musings in Mysore”, the author identifies similar kinds of landscape which remind her of homeland. Here we can see as an innate, subtle idealization of homeland that takes place in the author’s mind. Through a series of visual metaphors the author lets her inquiry loose, which leads to a nostalgic identification of Mysore first and Coorg later, with her homeland. Being far away from home compels Murphy to draw constant parallels and associations with home. “On the Mysore plateau many solitary, spreading trees grow in the wide, red-brown fields, giving the landscape a slightly English look - accentuated today by the bulky white clouds drifting across…” (OASC: 67).

It is after long meanderings that Murphy reaches Coorg, and the dramatic narration of her chancing upon Coorg is reckoned with the importance of a ‘discovery’ that should be ascribed to her. She begins with the description of

the place and delineates the landscape as a very pleasant and colourful entity, thus satisfying the mind as well as the senses. She orchestrates her achievement thus "Why has nobody ever heard of Coorg? Or have I been alone in my ignorance of this most enchanting region?" (OASC: 54). In Coorg she discovers an ideal setting for Place Fixation. She finds the landscape idyllic and colourful with a congenial climate.

> Mercara's average temperature is 66 ^{o} F and as we trotted down hill, the sun was warm, the breeze fresh and the sky intensely blue - an almost incredible colour.... At intervals, in the cool depths of the forest, we saw the sudden flourishes of colour... and once Rachel came within inches of treading on a small snake (OASC: 54).

Along with the ardent appreciation of beauty, the sense of the uncanny also lurks in Murphy's musings. Moreover, Murphy associates the people of Coorg with the pleasant and agreeable landscape there. "Obviously the people in Coorg are no less exceptional than the landscape, both men and women make one feel welcome to a degree that is most uncommon in India" (OASC: 55). This association in itself is an example of drawing an affable and positive parallel between the landscape and the bodyscape, and there is an ineffaceable link that the traveller traces between the two phenomena. This fact is a pointer to the traveller's gaze that forges a subconscious association between landscape and bodyscape. The union of body and land is also wrought out as an indelible part of the landscape. The traveller's gaze interconnects both and treats them as one and the same, thus establishing complicity between both in an unobtrusive manner.

> The sun was setting as we left Bandipur and came to an undulating cultivated land where dark red earth glowed in the hazy golden light and the glossy green of palms, plantains and wayside banyans stood out against a deep blue sky. Then a purple pink tinge dramatically suffused the whole scene as the sun dropped lower, and its last slanting rays burnished the classical brass water jars that were being carried across the fields on the heads of slim women in vivid, graceful saris. At such moments the simple, timeless beauty of rural India can be very moving (OASC: 176).

While witnessing a rural scene like this with all imaginatively conceived dramatic deliberations on nature, Murphy blends nature, human beings and their vivid, graceful, colourful movements into a single panoramic canvas in order to represent the melodious harmony of land with human beings; the union of stasis and movement. This blend represents the spool of the 'timeless' and 'perpetual' perfection of the rural scenario.

In this serene landscape where she is reminded of an Irish morning, Murphy finds evil lurking somewhere in the background. "On the edge of the forest …I was quite overcome by an awareness of evil - a feeling altogether unexpected and inexplicable, but none the less definite for that. (I omitted from my diary that night because I was still trying to shake off unpleasant after effects.) Similarly, amidst this tranquil isolation one is very aware of Good being in the ascendancy…" (OASC: 49). The fear, anxiety and apprehensions of an impending menace that pervade along with the appreciation of landscape are reminiscent of Sara Suleri's observation that "the beautiful can evoke in the text only a lacklustre description of its availability to imprisonment" (Suleri:

41). Thus, what Murphy finds as beautiful also harbours her fear of confronting the alien 'other'.

Geographical beauty for Murphy is a troubled reflection of the vagaries of her own fear, misapprehensions, unpredictability and ambiguity. Where does the fear arise from? This fear perhaps arises from her encounter with the strange 'otherness'. And this encounter is expressed as 'unexpected' and the 'inexplicable'.

Reversal of Gaze

The experience of the intimidating 'otherness' is manifest more in Murphy's descriptions of the reversal of the gaze. Murphy posits instances of such reversal and her reaction to it as a problematic realm which emphatically underpins the socio-cultural differences between her and the 'counter gazing' object. On a few occasions, she elaborates on the 'gazed' subject as an active agent, who reciprocates with alacrity to the act of being gazed at. For example, on her way to Mysore, she narrates the instance of a few toddlers fleeing with terror at the sight of a travelling white woman and her child. "We passed a few huts with shaggy straw thatches and glimpsed a few toddlers who fled from our strange white faces, howling with terror. Perhaps their mothers use Europeans as bogy-men" (OASC: 65). At this juncture, Murphy condones the stance that visuality is a matter of habit. As Murphy tours the whole of South India, she experiences the reversal of gaze, which lingers in her mind with a disturbing tenacity.

> The occupants were black-skinned, thick-lipped, curly-haired, bright-eyed and well-built. Most of them greeted us cheerfully, when they had

> recovered from their incredulity on seeing a more or less a white woman and a child strolling down the road, but the toddlers were terrified and fled shrieking to the shelter of their mother's skirts (OASC: 29)

Here the encounter is purely a racial one and Murphy is a bit taken aback by the instinctive rather crude responses of to it. As she tries a string of adjectives to describe the colour and the race of the people, their reaction to seeing her is that of incredulity that verges on a kind of shock. Murphy and Rachel are subject to 'collective' gaze of men, women and children. Murphy concludes that the gaze is basically racial and converts the racial implications of the reversal of gaze into the ignorance of the lower middle class or the poor in India. She comes to the irate conclusion that the media is so ineffectual that the people are ignorant about what others look like. "In countries as developed as India, one expects 'the media' to have by now given every body an approximate idea of what everybody looks like… the annual *per capita* income in Kerala is… so obviously the poorest class cannot afford to take their children to the coast, where they might get a glimpse of foreign tourists or at least see pages from magazines, pasted on tea–house walls, which would give them some visual idea of white people" (OASC: 109). Murphy definitely tries to hide her ire by taking a condescending stance on her being observed and looked at during different occasions. She narrates the incident of her bathing at Cape Comerin that attracts undue attention to her bare bottom.

> Yesterday's experience taught me that it is futile to attempt to dress modestly. There are lots of corners, and relatively, yet a crowd of men, women and children pursues one to the farthest corner of all and

> stands staring, with pathological insensitivity, while one attempts, if one is fool enough, to cover one's nakedness. Last evening, being without a towel, I made no such attempt and the sight of my bare bottom provoked cyclones of laughter. It is nice to be able to cause so much of innocent amusement by the use of the most basic raw material (OASC: 129).

Here, again Murphy is subject to 'collective' gaze from men, women and children. Murphy tries to evade the gaze though. Here Murphy narrates how it was her turn to be caricatured, as her body becomes a piece of exhibitionist spectacle. The gaze disturbs her to an extent of violating her physical needs to privacy, but she converts the incident to a big joke as she unselfconsciously becomes the basic raw material for it.

In Coorg too Murphy is subject to gaze; but she observes that White bodies are observed as visual spectacles, without any intrusion. The gaze is seen as more or less harmless and unobtrusive. The Murphys are being observed as curious spectacles but there is a lot of reticence, if not restraint on the part of the observers. One has to note that this gaze emanates from the lower middle classes who more or less belong to the periphery of Coorg life. The distance the gazers maintain as well as the self-effacing reserve they uphold are really lauded by Murphy, who is of the opinion that the majority of Indians are otherwise.

> Because of the threshing our yard is more populated these days than it normally would be as we are a marvellous added attraction - something like a side-show at a circus. All hours people wander up to our

> apartment to observe the odd habits of the foreigners; but they never stay long or handle anything - just study us shyly from the top of the ladder (OASC: 189).

Sensual Imagery in Landscaping

The olfactory, visual and auditory images blend into one to create an exotic and eroticised facet of landscape. Synaesthetic metaphors and images in landscaping are poignant devices with which the 'humanisation' of landscape takes place. Synaesthesia is achieved by the unconscious merger of different kinds of sensuous images in an imaginary cauldron where the stimulated sense blends with that of the experienced one and both become inseparably one and the same. The following quote from Murphy is a case in this point:

> …each rural sound is separate, distinct and comprehensible – the soft trot of cattle-hooves on dust, the tossing of rice on a wicker tray, the crowing of a cock, the squeaking of a pulley as water is raised from the well, the harsh disputes of the parakeets, the shouts of men urging oxen around the threshing-floors, the barking of a dog, the grinding of grain in stone hand-mills, the laughter of children, the thud of a coconut falling…. I awoke at six thirty to hear an exotic dawn chorus of jungle - birds and see a silver sky thriving blue behind the trees. A thick mist lay on the paddy valley and the moisture was dripping to the ground like slow rain, from the leaves of the immensely tall palms (OASC: 184).

The visual, tactile and the auditory images in both animate and inanimate nature coalesce into a form of landscape that is personified and humanised. As the elements, the sky, water and the earth, blend into a labyrinthine and

consummate whole, the living and the non-living things also merge tacitly in this panoramic landscape. The sensory images and metaphors are profoundly invoked through landscaping. The visual, gustatory and tactile metaphors are aroused with a dogged persistence so as to render the target reader a 'feel' of the landscape that is described.

> Wherever one looks there is beauty, none of it spectacular or wild or dramatic but all of it profoundly satisfying. The light has an exhilarating clarity one expects only at a much higher altitude; the colours glow with magical vitality and the very air tastes good. Hence there is the warmth of the Coorg welcome, which makes one soaked in contentment as the land itself is soaked in golden sunshine (OASC: 210).

Going Away and Coming Home

At the same time, during her stay in Coorg, she elaborates on the reasons why she is attached to the paradisiacal beauty of Coorg.

> I set out, after all, to tour South India, and my lingering seems suspiciously like escapism. Undeniably, Coorg is a place apart- clean, quiet, uncrowded, unmodern, not impoverished at any level of society, never too hot or too cold at any time of the day or night and populated by exceptionally congenial people. Add a truly magnificent landscape to all this and you have a perfect paradise (OASC: 89)

In appreciating and fixing a place like Coorg, Murphy undergoes the elaborate ritual of trying to locate the ethnological origins of the Coorgis, trying to

sketch their history, politics, etc. This aspect is also an inherent part of Place Fixation. Coorg's uncanny resemblance to England/Ireland is one of the factors that is harped time and again in the book.

> …as we walked up a long drive I could for a moment have believed myself in some quite corner of England. On either side, green park land was dotted with handsome trees; nearby grazed a few fine horses and a herd of even finer cows, and in the distance, beyond the big house amidst its brilliant abundance of flowers and shrubs, lay the long uneven line of the Ghats. Their gentle blue is contrasted with the vivid, sharp, almost incredible blue of the Coorg sky…. Nor would one pass there a nursery of orange-tree saplings and baby-coffee bushes, each infant protected by a wicker shield… (OASC: 95).

To Murphy, home becomes the central metaphor indicating tradition and its endurance in the life of the Coorgis. One can also observe remnants of feudal nostalgia that is mixed along with this uncritical admiration for tradition.

> …an imposing, two-storied, brown-tiled house, freshly painted white, with verdigris pillars, balcony-railings and window-surrounds. On the left, as one approaches, are two solidly built granaries, on the right is the well - some eighty feet deep- and beyond it stand three white washed huts where the Harijan field labourers live. Moving around to the side entrance, opposite these huts, one sees roomy stone cattle-sheds and two threshing-floors now over looked by great growing ricks of rice-straw. And all around, at a little distance, stand majestic trees that must be centuries old - some bearing enormous, cream coloured

> waxen blossoms with a powerful scent which fills the air at dusk (OASC: 180).

Home is described as a sturdy establishment and it is described in many 'solid' metaphors. The plenitude at home is indicated through the description of granaries, wells, labourers, cattle as well as the ancient and brawny trees that buttress the age-old traditions of the so-called 'inner space', home. In a graphic representation of a traditional Coorg house, Murphy projects the antiquity, sturdiness, plenitude, and the symbolic durability of tradition through its age-defying mechanism of survival. By these descriptions of home we can see Murphy trying to swerve and manoeuvre her nostalgic recollections of the 'home' she had left behind to that of the 'place she has fixed'. Through chromatic images, metaphors of long lasting sturdiness and the dexterous visual display of light against darkness, she invokes 'home' images and she, simultaneously wallows in voyeuristic feast painted by herself. By employing this device, Murphy elaborates the process of the traveller becoming 'temporary residents' thus familiarising and internalising the 'Place Fixed' as one's own 'home'.

This identification with home is brought to an intense level as the human characters also blend into the familiar landscape of 'home':

> At all events, the Coorgs have never heeded this prohibition [of liquor] and excessive drinking is undoubtedly their worst collective fault. Often men stagger home at lunch time unable to keep upright without assistance and the local reactions to this spectacles remind me very much of Ireland. People are mildly amused or affectionately chiding, or

> ribaldry witty, or occasionally slightly impatient - but never critical (OASC: 194).

From this identification Murphy's cultural peregrinations lead her to 'feel at home away from home'. Murphy tells us her own transition of seeking a 'temporary' abode that leads to a feeling of settling down 'permanently'. "Everyday I fall more seriously in love with Coorg; it is the only place, outside my own little corner of Ireland, where I could imagine myself to live permanently' (OASC: 210).

Here we can see the author's final identification with the land or the Place Fixed. Her sojourn in time and place has in fact led her to herself, thus enabling her to discover herself through the land she explores.

ii

Photographs Speak: Sarah Hobson's A Family Web: A Story of India

Photographs and illustrations are systems of representation, which help the readers and viewers to experience, consume, interpret, and "make sense of their lives both as image-makers and viewers. In essence, we construct ideological selves through a network of representations _ many of them visual, this include television, popular magazines, art and magazines" (Struken and Cartwright 2000: 56). To this list I would like to add travel photography and illustrations too. Peter D. Osborne in his *Travelling Light: Photography, Travel and Visual Culture*, illustrates the nexus between travel and photography thus:

> "the making of visual images has always cohabited at the core of the general process of modernity. Photographs superseded earlier forms of graphic imaging, whose role in the construction of the taste and desire for travel, of the objects and goals of travel and the portrayal of the range of travelling subjects themselves had been important"(2000: 3).

He also says that the cognitive importance of seeing and travelling and the establishment of spatial realism and naturalism are conserved in travel books, which have photographic/illustrative images as the balancing phenomena in them. In travel photography, the portrayal of a different set of cultures, people, terrains, etc, takes place and this in fact highlights the aspect of 'difference'. Inference to the spatial and cultural distance, which appears to be natural and co incidental, is another interesting factor, which is brought out

through the perspective of the lens. Many theorists on the visual culture have already demonstrated that photographs are not above any sort of critical scrutiny. Osborne proves with the help of actual photographs that they are not passive and reflective, though they present a bona-fide, authentic, near-real copy image of the real. Through the analysis of various photographs, he establishes the fact that in effect they connived with the colonial project by becoming apparatuses of control (2000: 39).

Here, it is necessary to elaborate on the role of photography as a device of representation and as a tool, which further perpetuated the colonial enterprise. As I am dealing with a number of portraits, it is necessary to begin with portraiture in paintings as well as photography and dwell briefly on the history of photography in India. Throughout the history of portraiture, to begin with paintings, portraits were meant for a specific kind of people. In the realm of image-making, portrait paintings came into prominence as a sub-genre in painting in the sixteenth century onwards.[19] Portraits are defined by their likeness or lack of likeness to the sitter. Portraits, in paintings for example, have always served as vehicles for specific people [collectively named as patrons] whose identities they wish to establish and perpetuate. Besides this, in portrait paintings, body becomes the terrain on which non-physical realities could be mapped and visualised. Usually, portraits used to be of people who were important in their historic time. They also provide us the factual information about the lifestyles and the society of those particular times, the society in general. Portraits, in their exact likeness, established themselves heartily with the patronage of a few connoisseurs who could very well afford the luxuries of being represented in ways that immortalised them.

It was at this stage that photography made its entry. Its technical precision reduced many errors.

Photography was invented in 1839 and in that year Louis Daguerre produced the daguerreotype. In England, Fox Talbot produced the negative and perfected the art of producing a photographed image on paper. These twin industries, according to Carol Crashaw and John Urry, [who trace the history of tourism and photography in the essay "Tourism and the Photographic Eye"] along with the setting up of a railway terminus, almost coincided with and gave an impetus to the establishment of tourism as an industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Crashaw & Urry 1997: 180). Maria Sturken and Lisa Cartwright elaborate on the popularity and the utility value of the device, when it was introduced in the nineteenth century, which rendered precision and an undisputed certitude in representing 'reality':

> Photography thus became an integral part of both scientific professions and the regulations of social behaviour by bureaucratic institutions of the state and in the social sciences, such as anthropology and sociology, to enable the creation of the subject positions of the researcher (anthropologist) and the object of study (in many cases, defined as the "native"). The versatility of the photographic image thus spawned a broad array of image-making activities for the purpose of *surveillance*, regulation, and categorization (2001: 95).

Photography was introduced in India in 1840, a few months after it was developed in Europe. (Pinney 1997: 17) It was more or less an apparatus of the colonial state. Pinney quotes William Simpson's *India Ancient and Modern*

(1862) to elaborate on the spectacular dimensions brought out by photography.

> To represent India by mere word-painting is an almost impossible task. The most graphic writing falls short of the mark of faithful description. Only a vague, unsatisfactory idea of the objects represented by the printed page is left on the reader's mind (1997: 17).

According to Pinney, photography became a decisive tool in sharpening the descriptive rhetoric of any traveller [read colonizer]. During the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, there was an explosion of knowledge by means of new disciplinary discourses like anthropology and ethnography. For these studies, empirical surveys were necessary and note taking, recording, etc, became basic components of field work [which generally involved travelling]. At this point we can see that camera also became an important tool for recording the facts and findings collected from the field, which were invariably in places far away from the metropolitan centre. The camera also helped the British to visualise the spatial and human dimension of the colony and the enormity and variegations were flattering to deceive the viewers.

On the basis of the credibility lent by photography, precedence was given to the scientific recording of facts over the much time more consuming tedium of sketching and illustrating. Moreover the illustrations rendered by the artists of the Empire were beheld with a substantial amount of suspicion by the consumers at home (Pinney 1997: 18). This suspicion was based on the artist's potential to prevaricate and unleash his/her fantasy in representation.

Malavika Karlekar, in *Re-visioning the Past: Early Photography in Bengal*, poignantly illustrates the intellectual fibre of photography: "The product of scientific enquiry and years of experimentation, photography was a powerful … tool in the quest of a growing intellectual tradition committed to empiricism and a recording of the world as it appeared to the observers" (2005:8). She further expands on its role in the Indian context,

> …surveying , cartography, and dactylography were vital aids to British rule committed to consolidation of authority not only through governance but also through an understanding of territory and exclusion with the concomitant emphasis on surveillance and control. As such an understanding necessarily entailed much more than the written word, artists, cartographer, surveyors, dactylographer, engravers and photographers were part of the imperial government" (2005: 27).

Karlekar mentions that photography during that period had twin functions as an instrument of surveillance on the one hand as well as a tool for poetically depicting a pleasing spectacle, on the other[20] (2005: 36). This ensured physical control over of the subjects as well as delusive smugness, which guaranteed a psychological mastery over the Empire as a prized possession. Mastery of the latter kind was also meant for an audience at home who were eager to know about the distant colony.

As we can infer from the preceding paragraphs, it was the systematic application of photography as a tool in narrating the colony that gave rise to the touristic importance of India in the eyes of an imperial traveller. 'Timeless'

monuments, people who were entirely different, and landscapes, which were enchanting and exotic, were immortalised and imported to the imagination of a readership at home who was temporally and spatially distant from the colony. According to Crashaw and Urry:

> The development of photography and the growth of tourism have been closely bound together. The invention of the camera, the manufacture of the ubiquitous box camera and the development of daylight loading film and the mass-production of picture post cards have all coincided with landmarks in the democratisation of travel and the expansion of tourism (Rojek& Urry 1997: 180)

We have already seen that the aesthetics of landscape was deeply embedded in the artistic and literary mindscape of England, and incidentally camera became a tool for travelling to capture the exotic other. By the twentieth century, "travel for pleasure had become well-established and picture taking was becoming a popular past-time" (Rojek and Urry 1997: 181). Initially, there may have been large-scale male control over the act of looking through both one's own and one's camera's eyes; but later there were many women photographers in the colonial India. Lady Charlotte Canning, an amateur photographer and wife of Governor General Lord Canning, was one of the earliest photographers who tried to capture India with all its visual glories (Karlekar 2005: 35). Not much work on the contribution of women photographers is available, but indeed it would make an interesting study in itself.

As mentioned earlier, not many theories on the agential position of women as

photographers or women behind the camera are readily available. Here, would like to look at the camera work as well as illustrations of Sarah Hobson, to formulate a handy theory of women's 'gaze' who become originators and interpreters of meaning. In this section of my dissertation, I shall be looking at how '"bodyscaping"' is effectively conceived with the help of the photographic eye by one of the women travellers in Independent India. In the book, *Family Web: A Story of India*, the author Sarah Hobson complements her narratives with photographic information and illustrative details. In this particular section, I shall be analysing certain selected photographs and illustrations of Hobson. These selections have to be made at the cost of certain omissions due to constraints in time and space in this dissertation.

Sarah Hobson came to join her husband who was working on his Oxfam and BBC project on family planning in India. Though the book is intended as a sociological project the author adds apologetically that it was impossible to sustain the objective. "To remain as objective recorder was even more difficult once I was sharing their confidence, though any idea of helping them proved poignantly inadequate. I have therefore included my relationship with them in the story in order to show the difficulties which must face any outsider wishing to enter a community whose codes and structure rest more on the need to survive than on humanistic principles" (FW: xiii). We are told in so many words that the author is presenting a phenomenon which exists on basic instinct of survival, and not on 'humanistic values' [with which the author has grown up with or she had been exposed to all her life]. She also has a specific audience in her mind to whom she reports her intention of narrating the details of an Indian family she had worked on. For this she uses a Family-Tree

diagram (Fig 4) in the beginning of the book where she neatly charts out the relation between members of the family, their gender, age, their educational status, etc. It is interesting to note the author witnessing the perplexities and confusions latent in her queries as she tries to etch out a family tree.

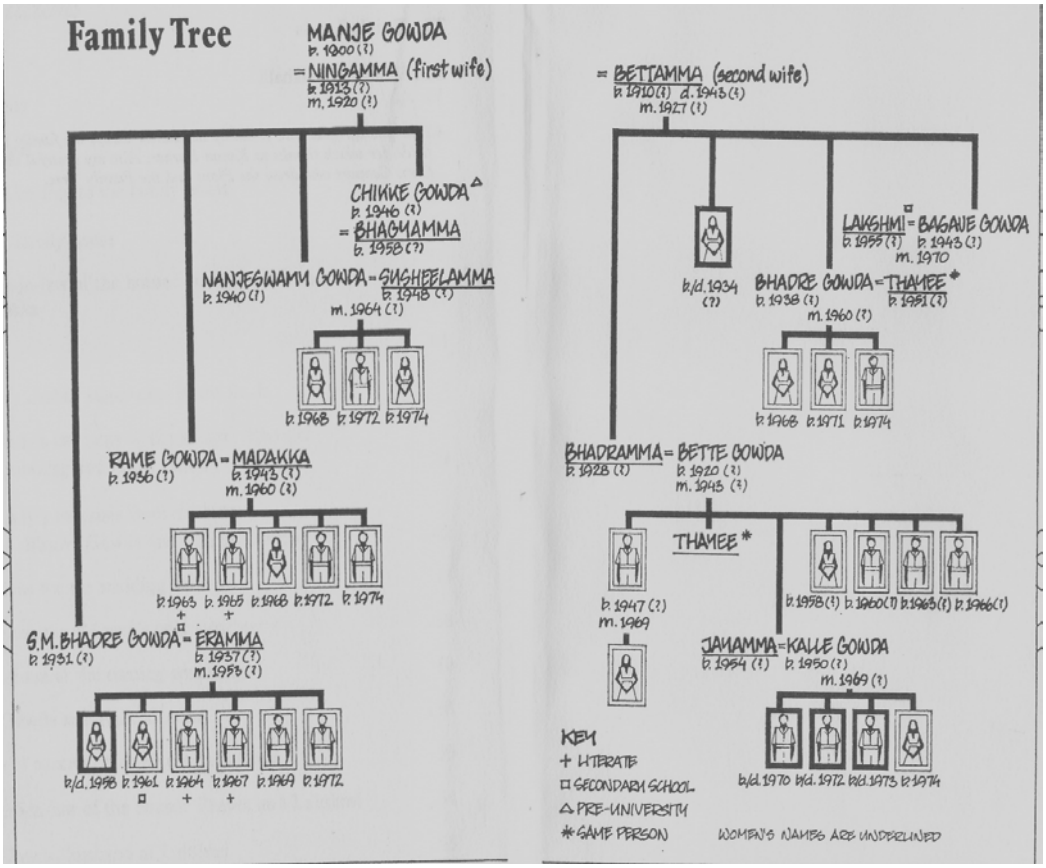

Figure 4: Family Tree

It seemed a little confusing so I asked their permission to draw up a family tree: I knew it would also produce a lot of unguarded information. But the old man and the old lady could not agree on the details. Each named the sons in a different order with different ages. The old man had talked about a daughter who had died; the old lady spoke of only four sons; the old man added two more sons and a daughter, and the old lady deducted another two who were

living in the town. I tried to match the sons with their wives, and then add in the children, but this only increased my confusion (FW: 12).

Subsequently after the illustration of the family tree, for various purposes of research, especially to 'highlight the urban-rural conflict in India' she goes on to delineate the architectural design of the family house (Fig. 5). The author gives us a glimpse of the house, which is drawn to our attention as the quintessence of a well-to-do village house. Hobson recalls her meeting with the family and the patriarch of the family. She also tells us her position as the 'objective' observer of the family and their circumstances.

> We sat for a moment to take in the feel of the place. It seemed more homely now, and there was a roughness in its structure, which made it inaccessible. The mud walls were freestanding without any connecting ceiling except for some planks in part; the inside of the roof was strutted with tick bamboos supporting the layers of red clay tiles.
>
> 'Your house is very fine', I said. The old man did not acknowledge the compliment but stared impassively ahead (...) 'The one as we entered the village?' I asked. 'Who does it belong to?' (...)
>
> I looked at the old man. 'Yours?' I said with surprise, for the family did not look very prosperous: they had no flesh on their bodies, their clothes were shabby and ragged, and their house displayed no luxury. But then I checked my surprise: I would not make such judgements or show such subjective feelings - I wished only to learn, to listen, and to record. (FW: 8)

It is the inaccessibility and the 'difference' in design and purpose that compel Hobson to illustrate the picture of the house describing the house as a multipurpose construction which has destined space for every thing: cattle shed, room for house hold implements, washing place, grain store, cooking area [kitchen with an ante room], god's corner, etc. Yet it is diametrically different from a western concept of domestic space where the parlours, sitting rooms, porches, porticos and kitchens are precisely and strictly divided.

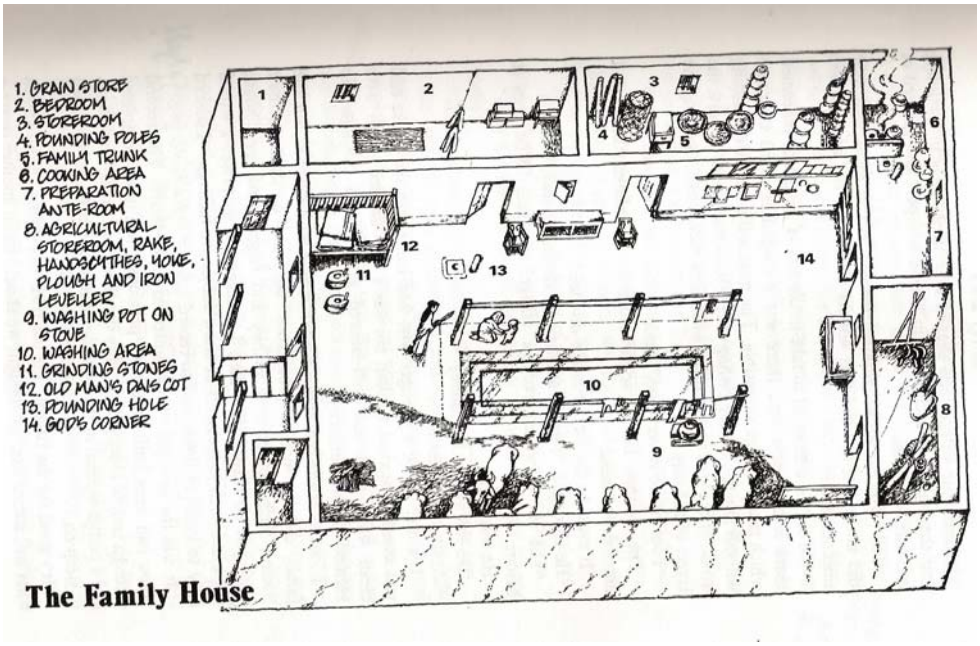

Figure 5: Family House

The author says,

> Manje Gowda's house stood at the widest part of the street: an impressive house whose verandah was made from massive blocks of granite plastered with red cement. Three carved pillars supported the porched roof, and a lavish roadway glistened with silver paint. At least, it was lavish by village standards, and I felt the need to see things in

> village terms. By western standards, the house was a bit of a shack, though solid enough to withstand storms, and pleasantly inviting (FW: 5).

Through these illustrations, the author intended to erase her subjectivity, we can find her trying to etch out the point of 'difference' and straighten out the cultural 'confusions' that await the target reader as she/he reads the narrative.

Figure 6: Cover Photograph

The cover photograph of *Family Web* is that of four women in the act of exhaustive and severe physical labour. It is a black and white picture against a red background, where four sari-clad women help each other carry burden. On the reverse of the book, we can find a man shading his eyes and gazing at a distance. The women display the joint struggle of the sorority in earning a livelihood. The faces of the women are not clear. The book is a sociological study on the joint family system in India by a taking single family, the Gowda

family, as the point of reference. But as the cover photograph illustrates, it has its emphasis on the role of women within the family. The collective toil and the chief responsibilities, which are manifest in their fight for survival, are undoubtedly illustrated in this picture. The title of the book, *Family Web,* printed on the cover is self-explanatory of the ensnaring network of the family and the institutional bonds that cage Indian women within the system. The man's aloofness from the women, his non- participation in the joint labour, is also tell-tale of the segregation of the sexes and his non-involvement in the intensive labour which ballasts the women in the community. This cover illustration becomes the keynote of the book in which she explores India through the social institutions, like the family, present here.

In this photograph we can se the production of third world women to a target reader at home. By muting and blurring the bodies against a bright background, the women are photographed in action, implying the tale of a homogenous group caught in the web of oppression.

In another narrative, the author introduces us to her rendezvous with the 'old man' and the 'old woman' of the family she stays with for her study. In the family-tree Hobson gives details of all the names and the chronological details of the members of the family she had chosen to study. The photographs and the following verbal narrations are taken as instances of "'bodyscaping'" in this section. It is through these narrations that the author experiences her encounter with India. In the book she introduces the old woman as "a small wiry woman with a waspish face and fanatical eyes" (FW: 5). She introduces the head of the house, or 'old man' as she constantly refers to him, as "an old man with a shrewd shrivelled face: his lips were thin over toothless gums, his

cheeks hung over his jaw bone. Grunting a little, he manoeuvred both legs over the edge of the cot and slid mumbling to the floor" (FW: 6).

Figure 7: "The old woman"
Figure 8: "The old man"

These pictures of 'the old man' and 'the old woman' (Fig. 7 & 8) are the opening portrait photographs, which appear after a brief description of the physical demeanour well as the mannerisms of the old couple. These pictures serve as the visual testimonies to the process of linguistic understanding. They are frozen in time and the black and white framework of the photograph gives them an antique gloss as characters who are, momentarily captured by the lens, caught in the spectrum of eternity. The old woman's profile is represented in shades of grey, with a mane of dishevelled grey hair. Her eyes are closed frenetically uttering prayers. She has an incense holder on her hand and one hand is stretched in an imploring gesture to the divine. The fadeout effects of light and shadow project her high cheekbones and the wrinkles and folds of her body. Her mouth and eyes are lined by fine wrinkles. Her sari is

draped loosely on her body in sloppy untidiness. Along with the wrinkles that hang loose on her skin, we can find an assortment of bangles, which, are traditionally worn by married women belonging to the old lady's caste in South India. The incense smoke spirals up in a quasi-mystic manner. In her body we can definitely read the trappings of a stagnant tradition.

As a rejoinder to this photograph, the author narrates an interesting piece of recorded information about the old woman and her religious beliefs. This piece may be coincidental, without any purpose of continuity, between the visual image and the written signs, but it definitely makes interesting reading.

> The old lady stood in the corner before the gods, her hands raised to her tired old face, a joss stick smoking through her fingers.
>
> "Who are the gods, Ajji?" I asked.
>
> "What does she know?" said Chikke Gowda. "She doesn't know anything."
>
> "What do I know?" said the old lady with shame…. The old lady knew the gods by attribute, but she could not distinguish between their pictures, though she had seen them most of her life. … "What do I know? I just fold my hands and say, 'Lakshmi, do us good. Rama, Arjuna, Bhima, Surya Narayana, Ishwara, Nanjundeswara, Parvati, Parameshwara, do us good.' That's what I say. Am I educated enough to know other things?"(FW: 252-3)

The next picture (Fig. 8) is that of the old man taking his weekly bath. The old man is a thin, shrivelled figure with long limbs and claw like fingers. His feet,

like talons, almost clasp the elevated-ground on which he squats in a lithe, athletic manner. He purses his lips in concentration, and light falls on his shaven head, which projects his large ears and highlights his hooked nose. He scrubs his arms and a small vessel for pouring out water is placed near him. A larger cauldron [probably full of water] is placed on an earthen fire place in the background. We can also see a calf in the muted and diffused backdrop. The old man wears striped shorts: the muscles of his calf, the veins of his arms, legs and the hollows of his chin and shoulder blades are fore grounded by the subtle play of light and shade. We can also see a rag near him. His eyes are cast down and rapt in attention. Though there are signs of the authority that is assigned to him, there is also an inkling of wizened weariness, vulnerability and fragility that is conveyed through eyes of the lens. The picture is self-explanatory, in the sense that the author justifies the photograph by giving us a glimpse into the breakdown of the power of the patriarch, i.e. the old man, within the joint family. Hobson's book, in a way, chronicles the case study of a family, which is at the brink of breaking off into nuclear units. The old man is the symbol of tradition and its values; he single-handedly manages to support the institution of joint-family for long. She puts in scarps of the old man's conversations together to demonstrate his eventual admission to the deterioration of the joint family system and the slow resignation to his fate.

> (*Of the joint family*) "Its nice, but its not working very well. If we aren't united, if we don't co-operate with each other, how can we do anything? There should be unity if anything is to be done. Instead they fight with each other."

(*Of division)* "I feel so sad. Sad. That it should happen right in front of my eyes I feel sad about the family" (FW: 211& 213).

Here, the 'old woman' is shown as an epitome of religiosity coupled with ignorance and shrewdness; and the 'old man' as a helpless link of the crumbling order of a feudal joint family. They are also shown as trapped in tradition and superstition. The old woman's picture shows an uneducated Indian woman's obsession with religion, which is steeped in ignorance, and the old man is a symbol of the crumbling order of patriarchy.

Figure 9: Susheelamma
Figure 10: Madakka

The subsequent photographs (Fig. 9&10) are that of two mothers. Both women are the daughters in law of the family, which was under study. In the footnote of the picture, the author mentions that Susheelamma (Fig. 9) wanted to have a boy, instead she delivered a girl. Fig.10 is that of Madakka, the eldest daughter in law and the author mentions in the footnote that she tried to abort but she had a son. Both these women are picturized in their

specific roles as mothers. In the picture, Susheelamma purses her lips in wry askance and impatience as she lifts up the infant from her make-shift wicker cradle fastened with coir ropes. She has the *pallu* of her sari draped over her head. The sari borders are noticeably frayed. Light gently falls on her face and arms highlighting her youth and well-defined features. The infant is swathed clumsily from the head to the chest and her malnourished limbs can be seen from between the coir ropes. The next picture is that of Madakka (Fig. 10). She looks away from the frame with full eyes and an open mouthed despair as she nurses her baby on her lap. The sari folds fall off her emaciated body, displaying her almost flat, sagging breasts. In the background, a young boy plays on all fours on a wooden cot.

Sarah Hobson gives us a verbal portrayal of Susheelamma along with this photograph. “Susheelamma was handsome and her body gracefully proportioned with full hips and breasts; she was also sexily languid, dropping her arms over her stomach, bending her head close her eyes and to pout her mouth. Her face was soft and submissive and her brown eyes lacked curiosity” (FW: 32). Interestingly there is a gripping piece of narration about the way the author’s gaze lingers on the female body with a gynoerotic[21] pleasure.

> She stripped off her clothes and crouched shivering while water was poured over her hair, over her body, pot after pot till all water was finished. Her hair was long and black round her shoulders; her skin was sallow and firm except for the sagging stomach. She had a fine body with long legs, wide hips, a broad yet delicate back, and full breasts weighed down with the milk of pregnancy(FW: 22).

Here, by representing two women in the process of mothering, the pain and burdens of motherhood is clearly represented. They are represented as women with identical troubles and as homogenous subjects who are under the scrutiny of an all-knowing and all-encompassing gaze. This is also a gaze that is internalises a scopophilic relish is loaded with desire. Hobson's right of entry to private spaces gives her a direct access to the restricted chambers of Indian women's lives. The description of Sushelamma taking is bah is an instance of her access to it and the ethnographical translation of the process of witnessing seen from the eyes of a privileged white woman. These verbal residuals are finely salvaged, represented and shared with the help of camera eyes.

Figure 11: Nanjeswamy

Figure 12: Rame Gowda

The book also contains photographs of other men in the family. Hobson, in fact, finds it hard to forge an intimate relationship with the men of the family. They are shy, formal or too distant. It was only when her husband Tony comes to the village with the filming unit, that men actually open up to her, that too

with a certain reticence. The pictures of men in Hobson's book make an interesting study of how the male body is contoured by the female gaze. The first person whom Sarah meets in the village is Manager Nanjeswamy, who manages the finances of the Gowda family, and by doing so becomes the honorary head of the family. Hobson describes her meeting with him thus:

> Another man of about thirty-five crossed the path in front of us with a wooden plough balanced on his shoulder. He had a handsome, sensual face and his black hair was greased smoothly into casual dropping waves; his shorts were bright from white and orange stripes; his vest outlined the contours of a well-formed chest (FW: 2).

After charting Nanjeswamy Gowda's body map with a meticulous surveying eye, she goes on to describe his mannerisms. By looking at Nanjeswamy's demeanour, Hobson allies his outwardly charm to his dominating behaviour. Her gaze encounters caution and Nanjeswamy's desire to control rather than be the object of control.

> He did not answer, and his face showed no expression in its tight mouth and sunken cheeks. Only his eyes were wary. He swung back his arms from muscled shoulders and took the lead as the path narrowed, forcing us into a single file... (FW: 2).

Nanjeswamy is shown to be talking animatedly, gesticulating strongly, his slick hair, cheek-hollow and well-defined features are highlighted. He has a vast, expansive backdrop of the fields behind him, which may connote his single-handed control over land and property. The next picture is that of Rame Gowda, Nanjeswamy's brother, who is tending his son's sores. The

turbaned middle-aged man is careworn with downcast eyes in rapt attention and the child's face is contorted with pain. There he is posited as Nanjeswamy's opposite, engaged in an earnest act of spreading a herbal paste. These men are also caught in action. Nanjeswamy is photographed in an animated conversation that makes him the marker of the male authority that controls the patriarchal structure of the family Hobson was working on, whereas Rama Gowda is shown as less powerful in the male hierarchical system. Here, too the author turns out to hold the reins of agential power as she witnesses and translates these dimensions through her photographs.

Figure 13: Jayamma

Similarly, in the three portraits of Jayamma (Fig. 13), the camera eyes capture her in three different moods. In all the pictures she looks away from the frame. In two pictures, Jayamma is photographed from a three-quarter frontal angle. In the next one, her face is profiled as she tilts her head further. The first picture captures her in a mood of beatific cheerfulness in which looks as if she is absolutely unconscious of the camera eye. She gives a gummy smile through her slightly downcast eyes and through the outline of her aquiline

nose we can see the filigrees of her nose stud. On the prominently visible side, her conspicuously empty and perforated nose is emphasised. On her forehead her bindi is smudged. She has a sari draped on her rather untidily and her matted and dishevelled hair is drawn behind to a bun. Light falls on her face illuminating her chiselled features and her square jaws are suffused in an even shade. In the next photograph, Jayamma knits her brows and looks at a distance with a weary, worried frown. In the third photograph, the frown remains and her eyes are pensively downcast with an uneasy pout. Jayamma's pictures, in her various moods narrate her entrapment in marriage [this is in fact discussed at length in the text]. Her disturbed life is narrated in a sequence that portrays her naïve sojourn into marriage and the oppression that came with it. Her smudged *bindi* as well as her unadorned nose also highlight this fact and also symbolically portray her struggle, hard work and poverty. The author focuses on her with a sympathetic bonding, illustrating her capacity to smile through her battles. Even in the text Hobson demonstrates her close association with Jayamma which was based on an instinctive affection.

> She laughed again, carefree. She looked even more like her mother… a face which had suffering concealed in its youth and a pain mixed into its beauty. For she was beautiful with her eyes set wide apart in a vulnerable, sensitive head. A brightness, an awareness pervaded her presence, and yet she was only twenty (FW: 67).

Figure 14: Bhadramma

Fig. 14 has the photograph of Bhadramma, the eldest daughter of the 'old man'. Bhadramma is photographed in the field during moments of intense labour. In the first photograph, she arches her body, with her legs akimbo, and she concentrates at a distance in an unswerving manner. A man can be seen in the background, probably shovelling some dung. She waits for the empty basket to be filled. She stands at ease like a man, legs apart, where we get a glimpse of her calves, illustrating the author's voyeuristic description, between her sari folds. In the subsequent pictures, she herself works with an iron-shovel and then she hoists her burden of dung on her head. In all these three pictures she screws up her face due to intensity of hard physical labour. The fourth picture is a three-quarter frontal portrait. We can see her full smile as she poses with the basket on her waist. The description of Bhadramma has strains of her personality congruent with photographs embedded in it.

> By contrast, Bhadramma, the old man's only daughter, was freer. She could make her own decisions, choose what to wear, organize her own routine, partly because her husband was old and incapable of running the household, partly because of her personality and not sharing her house with others. She had an imposing presence - proud, erect, honest- with a touch of flamboyance in her orange blouse and the display of jangling bangles she carried on each wrist - silver, glass, plastic of all colours, forming a solid band six inches deep. She looked young, unscarred by seven children, yet her face was wisdom which perhaps had come from her suffering; her eyes revealed tenderness, and the delicate structure of her bones showed sensitivity. But she was not sentimental or precious - her mouth was full and sensuous and frequently broadened into a powerful smile (FW: 61).

For portraits of Bhadramma and her daughter Jayamma, photographed in the fields, unlike other women who are picturised within their domestic spaces. Their stories are emblematic of woman's struggle and misery. Bhadramma is a lone fighter who has little support from her husband and she is away from the joint family. Jayamma has a very unhappy marriage and she is physically fragile due to the effect of a few miscarriages. Both these women do not enjoy the kind of social acceptance that the other women in the family enjoy. On the one hand, Bhadramma is hard pressed; she anchors her family single-handedly, like a patriarch. On the other, Jayamma is childless and she bears the social and domestic brunt of her inability to perform her role as a mother. Besides that, the author strikes a special bond with both of them where she forges a relationship with them based on mutual understanding and

sympathy. They are also portrayed as smiling and cheerful to remind the readers to that even in their hardships; poverty and misery, there are attributes in them which seem to transcend their physical realities. They are portrayed as natural, artless and bruised. They are perceived as different from other women who meet the given parameters of womanhood in the community; they seem to stand out from the space of domesticity. Their artlessness, spontaneity and lack of sophistication compel the author to blend them with the natural surroundings.

Sarah Hobson at the naming ceremony. Some of the family women look on.

Figure 15: Sarah Hobson

In the last picture, we can find Hobson herself participating in the name-ceremony of an infant in the family. This is an instance where the author is not behind the camera, but she is in front of it. She is watched by a group of curious onlookers. In this photograph, we can see her as someone on whom the gaze is directed, the photographic as well as the native gaze. But this photograph which is posited against the others bodies, is an excellent example of self-representation of the white woman as modern, privileged, at the same time, sensitive other cultures [notice Hobson in a saree, trying to fit into a 'traditional' Indian woman's role in the ceremony] and having perfect control

over their selves and their sexualities. This picture can be treated as a self-reflexive one, because in the book, Hobson can be seen contemplating the intrusion of the camera gaze on the private sphere, here, in the case of the Gowda joint family. As she watches the filming of the family members by her husband's documentary team, she realises the dangers of 'objectification,' that occasionally transgressed the rules and norms of the community as well as the privacy of the individuals.

> The film unit paid a lot of attention to Jayamma, perhaps because of my interest, but also because of her story and the tragic loss of children. They asked her to draw water in pots from the pool near her fields and heave them up the rock face while her husband watered the plants. She didn't dare refuse, and he did not object. It was later they recognised that this was the only job she never did when pregnant, as her husband fully recognised its dangers (FW: 161).

The agenda of the filming unit jeopardised Jayamma's pregnancy. Hobson realises this with a pang. But she is no longer the controller of the activity of narration and representation. She can only be silent witness to it ruminating about the camera manoeuvre, which gives no agency to the objects represented. She expresses her annoyance at these deflections in a thoughtful narrative

> I was so angry. I felt the [film] unit was trespassing in quarters where men didn't go- certainly not strangers. How could they trample about like that, and treat Susheelamma like an object? (FW: 163)

This trespassing into woman's private lives by the prying eyes of the camera seems to be unacceptable to her. The author finds herself to have lost her own agency after the arrival of her husband.

Through these bodyscapes, Hobson tries to map the history of a family and the plight of the women in it. As she tries to portray the women within the family, she also tries to bring in the entrapments of tradition and institutions with it. As she calls the book *Family Web: A Story of India*, she tries to takes the instance of the tenuous relationships within a particular family and she tries to bring in the trappings of power relationships within the system. By taking the example of one family, she tries to narrate her experience of India as well. In this instance, I would like to agree with Chandra Mohanty who analyses the representation of the third world women by Western women generally disseminates the notion of third world women as a homogenous category. She says:

> What is problematic about this kind of use of women as a group, as a stable category of analysis, is that it assumes an ahistorical, universal unity between women based on a generalised notion of their subordination…third women as a group or category are automatically and necessarily defined as religious (read: not progressive), family-oriented (read: traditional), legally unsophisticated (read: they are not still conscious of their rights), illiterate (read: ignorant), domestic (read: backward), and sometimes revolutionary…. (2003: 31 &40).

CONCLUSION

Here, from the three books examined hereto, some characteristics of landscaping can be arrived at. First, landscape and bodyscape are fused together as one and the same in the books that I am dealing with. As far as the topology of the landscape is concerned, the ideal landscape or the Place Fixed has an uncanny resemblance to the familiar landscape at home [For example, Coorg]. We can also notice that the process of visually scanning the landscape is almost identical to the traveller's process of trying to become the 'temporary resident' of the 'Place Fixed'. This process is carried out by the employment of auditory and visual images in a romantic fashion. Here, the traveller conjures up a space which renders the illusion of a 'home-away-from-home'. To produce this effect, the synaesthetic metaphors, provided by the traveller in the narration, render the landscape a personified and humanised form. But, in these processes, we can also find certain departures. The departure is where we find the landscape more idyllic and exotic than at home. In this idyllic landscape, along with its beatific and becalming qualities, one can feel the sense of foreboding, menace and fear of the traveller. These feelings somewhat correspond to that of the experience of the 'sublime' and the 'picturesque'. This bizarre and delusional fear of the traveller can only be explained as the traveller's trepidation in confronting the 'other'.

The metaphorical descriptions of the landscape also build up the heights of the dramatic narration of the landscape through which the author tries to establish the mysterious or exotic beauty of the Place Fixed, which inundates with an exotic beauty. It is at this point that the traveller tries to reinforce her position as the source of authentic authority and information. She tries to

establishe her credibility as the experienced informant/witness, whose first hand narratives enhance the authority and the weight of veracity and truth telling. We can find that the ultimate goal of place fixation through landscaping is to project the place fixed as the repository of natural plenitude, this fact is brought out by 'landscaping' and ""bodyscaping"". Through this fixation, or through the real and figurative exploration of the place, the traveller ultimately discovers herself through the land she explores.

In Place Fixation, as discussed earlier, the representation of spaces, through cartographies, family trees, etc, become necessary tools to import the idea of the 'other' for a reader at home. "Bodyscaping" is also one of the techniques of landscaping, mostly captured through the camera eyes. Bodyscapes, portrayed through the camera, which also are made to blend into the surroundings, generally comes with a verbal authentification of the visual phenomenon. There are places where the author tries to blur the boundaries of the verbal and the visual phenomenon, and in many cases, photographs remain narrative wholes. "Bodyscaping", through photographs, serves as a terrain on which that authorial gaze lingers. Photographs subsume the objects that are portrayed and serve as tools that are ready for interpretation. Nevertheless, through acts of "bodyscaping", which occur in the travel narratives I am working on, we can also see narratives that critique the position of the subject who objectifies images for readership. This critique of the gaze is very important, because it is the self that undergoes this scrutiny. This is a process of looking at others and seeing oneself. Through the exploration of spaces and through the conjuring up of real and imaginary landscapes, the travellers are travelling in space. They also travel in time through the narration history and

the related events. The next chapter deals with the act of travelling in time and how the women travellers analyse chronological time from their own subject positions.

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[1] *Oxford Dictionary* (2003) describes 'landscape' as: (1) the visible features of an area of land, (2) a picture of an area of countryside, (3) to improve the appearance of a piece of land by changing its contours, etc. *Webster's Dictionary* (2005) describes the term thus: (1) the area and features of land that can be seen in a broad view, (2) a picture, photograph, etc of countryside, often depicting natural elements, such as trees, rivers, mountains, etc (3) consisting of landscape, having landscape as one's subject, etc.

[2] Susan Bassnet, in her essay, "The Empire, Travel Writing and British Studies" connects the medieval urge to travel and seafaring , states: "It cannot be accidental that the great cycles of European medieval poetry all concern travel - the journeying of Orlando and his fellow knights, the quests of King Arthur and the denizens of Camelot, the great sea faring journeys of the Norse saga men." (Mohanty 2003: 23) Thus one can easily perceive the theme of quest as a predominant one during the medieval times and this persists even in the present times.

[3] As quoted by Percy G Adams, *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel.* Kentucky: The University of Kentucky Press, 1983: 39.

[4] During the time of Queen Elizabeth, after her victory over the Spanish Armada, the theme of quest achieved the figurative sophistication of exploration, discovery and assimilation (control), thus embracing an expansionist view with in it. The imaginative conception of the strange, exotic lands took off into myriad, fanciful forms especially after the queen herself sponsored various journeys out of her own treasury. For Elizabeth and her coterie of literary men, this theme, both in its real as well as imaginative form, was a fanciful throw of sprat to catch a whale. Those were the times when England had dreamt and aspired to do some real 'journeying and voyaging' to reach the unexplored 'nether' lands. Some men like Sir Walter Raleigh really 'made' it and wide publicity for travel as a financially rewarding and highly adventurous enterprise was propagated in his book *Discovery of Guiana* (1595). These

figments of imagination provided the most opportune material for Shakespeare. He explored the 'exotic netherlands' not quite unproblematically, but he investigated the native/coloniser encounter in detail, thus drawing heavily from the scrappy tit bits left behind by the travellers of that time. In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare attempts at an unleashing of his own imaginative rendezvous with a situation where the people of his own race explore an exotic island, which was inhabited by spirits and cannibalistic savages (Caliban, for example). It was around this time that landscape had also become an abstraction. The strangeness of the land served as an additional indicator of the sinister atmosphere in the play. Thus, we can see the Elizabethans unravelling their imagination by glossing over the theme of quest, exploration and travel by adding a new dimension of the landscape to their writings.

[5] Marvell's "The Garden" (1681) is a typical example of how the nostalgic longing for a paradisiacal past was represented in literature though landscaping. Dryden took a step further by integrating the landscape with his knowledge of the exotic. "The Indian Emperor" (1667) and "Aureng-Zebe" (1676) are but a few examples, which explore the exotic with the help of the landscape.

[6] He says that in the 19th century, (t)he reappraisal of the relative roles of reason and the imagination, the reaction against authority- academic, religious and secular- the preoccupation with liberty, the emphasis on the heroic and the struggle of man to overcome the hazards which threatened to thwart him in the attainment of his ideals, all these found expression in an upsurge of interest in the place of man within the natural order…thus Wordsworth concerned himself almost obsessively with man's experience of nature. Coleridge stressed the interaction between the human mind and the perceived environment. Scott, like many nineteenth century writers after him, made topographical context an integral part of romance… (Appleton 1996: 36).

[7] "In the 18th century, the Grand Tour was a kind of education for wealthy British noblemen. It was a period of European travel, which would last from a few months to 8 years. During the Tour, young men learned about politics, culture, art and antiquities of neighbouring countries. They spend their time sightseeing, studying and shopping. The Grand Tour was responsible for creating situated knowledges in a generation of young British adults. Italy with its heritage

of ancient Roman monuments became one of the most popular places to visit". Quoted from www.wikipedia.com.

[8] R. L. Brett. *The Third Earl of Shaftesbury*, London: Hutchingson, 1951: 146.

[9] John Dewey. *Experience of Nature*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1929.

[10] E. M. Gombrich. *Art and Illusion*. London: Phaidon Press, 1951.

[11] Laura Mulvey. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in *Feminism and Film*. Ann Kaplan. Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000:35. Mulvey, in "After Thoughts of 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' inspired by *The Duel in the Sun*", 1981, questions her own stance by opining that it is not possible to posit woman as a monolithic subject. Here, she reconsiders her position on the impossibility of an active female gaze.

[12] Chow quotes Jameson from the collection of essays *Signatures Visible*. New York: Routledge, 1990: 1.

[13] Barrie B. Greenbie, *Spaces: Dimensions of the Human Landscape*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981: xi. *Gestalt* is a term borrowed from Lacan from his *Le Semenaire I: Les Ecrits Techniques de Freud* (1953-4) Paris: Seuil, 1975. tr. John Forrester, *Freud's Writings and Techniques*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Jacqueline Rose, in her *Sexuality in the Field of Vision*, says that gestalt "is one's ability to represent one's body to itself ...to control the world in a physical sense." (1991):.43.

[14] Carl Jung as quoted by Greenbie.

[15] "My Lord Brouchner and Sir Edmund Pooly carried me down into the hold of India Ship, and there did show me the greatest wealth lie in confusion that a man can see in the world. Pepper scattered through every chink, you trod upon it: and in cloves and nutmegs I walked above the knees: whole rooms full. And silk in bales... as a noble sight as ever I saw in my life".

[16] "...that a common receptacle of all abandoned and undone men, the East Indies".

[17] "The man who has left behind him a number of works, in temples, bridges, reservoirs and caravanserais, for public good, does not die".

[18] Gunter Grass as quoted in Kampuchen, Martin. *My Broken Love: Gunter Grass in India and Bangladesh*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2001.

[19] Christopher Hurst, "A View from the King's Street: The Lure of Portrait *The Hindu.* " (Oct 1999)

[20] While identifying distinctive idioms of photography, Pinney calls them the 'detective' paradigm and the 'salvage' paradigm (Karlekar:2005: 40)

[21] I found it necessary to use the word as an equivalent of 'homoerotic' to specify the distinctness of the female experience

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Chapter III

‘Boulevard of [broken] dreams’, Her Stories of [His]tory

We have seen in Chapter I that travelling is a journey in time and space. Writings on travel can also be considered as inscriptions about one's voyages into different geographical spaces and time. Landscaping, as we have discussed and analysed in the second chapter, is the result of the traveller's encounter with varied spaces. A traveller's engagement with asymmetrical time can be gleaned from writings on the history of places in travel writing. As we have already seen, travel writing has been a much male-controlled realm. Female incursions into these areas were rare, sporadic and often adventurous. Though the worldview of women [especially, White women] has changed much during the latter-half of the twentieth century, precedence in these areas of writing had already been established by male writers. Women writers primarily retraced male footprints and once they successfully followed them, they seemed to have eventually internalized, subverted or rewritten the genres.

In this chapter, I shall be looking at how women perceive historiographical precedence by their male counterparts and how they write/rewrite history. I shall be looking into two texts, which dwell on the history of places. As history is basically a narration of the past, how the narration of time takes place in both these texts will be the main thrust of this chapter. Narration of time involves both 'time past and time present.' This ensues authors' tour of the spaces they cover physically. The authors, Gillian Tindall and Georgina Harding write the history of the places they visit in *City of Gold: A Biography of Bombay* (1982) and *Tranquebar: A Season in South India* (1993) respectively.

In these texts, it is interesting to notice that three generic strands intermingle in a rather disparate fashion. Historiography, biography, and autobiography coalesce, interact and combine in a synchronized manner here. Primarily, I am looking at the way in which history is retold or reinforced in both these texts with many 'participatory selves' and 'non-participatory selves' embedded in it. While I am adopting the standpoint that these texts are transcripts that have diverse and distinct generic divisions, I would also like to point out with the critic Judy Long (1999) that the notion of clear-cut generic divisions is problematic.[1] She makes an interesting and pertinent point that compartmentalization and adherence to categorical generic divisions and sub-divisions almost invariably exclude female narratives and encourage male narratives. That female writing traverses many borders and restrictions is one of the major grounds on which such exclusion is made. In this chapter, I would like to agree with Long on this point that generic divisions are more or less arbitrary parameters of compartmentalization and women's travel writing is one discipline that easily accommodates many generic divisions to its fold.

As we have discussed earlier, travel writing and historiography had been strictly male realms, shaped by male conventions and norms. Writing on these male dominated territories in itself would have been challenging to most of the women travel writers-cum-historians for the primary reason that there was already a pre-existing male canon that had laid down the basic preambles, rules and regulations. Entering that domain in itself is a rupture and along with that there are also instances of subverting the male conventions. However, the easy

coalescence of writing history, autobiography, biography, etc, while travelling in a different geographic space can be observed in almost all the texts that I am working with. This traversal is graced with an amazing synchrony. Moreover, the anonymous facets and the voices of women in history which had been buried so far are also unveiled in these texts.

While narrating history, it is important to notice that the writers Gillian Tindall and Georgina Harding adopt two different approaches in historiography. Gillian Tindall writes history from an 'objective' point of view narrating from the third person and erasing herself from the inscription. She narrates history through facts, biographies and other source books. Harding writes history using the first person narrative form, through her autobiography. She speaks from the vantage point of her own involvement and close association with the culture and people of the particular place she writes about.

As and when they write the history of the place, from entirely two different perspectives, they voice their own observations - explicit and implicit, on the present day social conditions - comments on gender, caste, politics, etc. Judy Long (1999) remarks on these differences in perspective, which are essential in historiography, and opines that the third-person claims of objectivity come from an androcentric tradition. She says that

> Third-person account is no substitute for the missing first-person accounts, nor can the fiction of the generic person bridge the gap. Problems of third-person accounts include distortions introduced by

> abstractions and unjustified generalization, exacerbated by an androcentric tradition. In addition, where the third-person constructions are defined from the perspective of the dominant group they serve for ideological purposes (1999: 7).

It is important at this point to understand how historiographers evaluate their fellows. Hayden White (1997), a famous historian, elaborates on the role of voice in the narration of historical phenomenon thus:

> ...first, narrative is regarded as a neutral 'container' of historical fact, a mode of discourse 'naturally' suited to representing historical events directly; secondly, narrative histories usually employ so-called natural and ordinary, rather than technical languages, both to describe their subjects and to tell their story; and the third, historical events are supposed to consist or manifest congeries of 'real' or 'lived' stories, which have only to be uncovered or extracted from the evidence and displayed before the reader to have their truth recognized immediately and intuitively (1997: 394).

This chapter is about women who adopt two different tones in writing history. One is of neutrality and distance and the other of involvement. While Tindall chooses the 'impartial' ways of narration, Hobson opts for the 'lived' or 'real' experience of history.

Growth of city: Tindall's City of Gold: A Biography of Bombay

As stated earlier, Tindall's book adopts a third-person way of looking at history, thereby attempting 'neutrality'. Through the voice of a detached observer, Tindall tries to bring about a non-intervening, unbiased tone in the book. As we have already analysed in the first chapter, Gillian Tindall's *City of Gold* begins with three quotations[2] - Samuel Pepys's descriptions about the splendour and opulence of the Indian coast, William Hickey's comments on the morbidity of the natives of the East Indies and Sheik Sadee's ruminations on the architectural wonders of an unnamed land. These quotations are from the sources the author had browsed through and represent three different perspectives through which an alien land has been viewed and scrutinized once upon a time. One the one hand, there is the exultation and the wonder of a diarist and well-known writer of his times who almost exoticizes India. On the other, we have an extreme reaction, which borders on the imperialistic vision of the oriental native and the next quotation speaks about an oriental looking at his own mirror image and appreciating the various developmental glories of the associated oriental territory. We have already seen Place Fixation happening through these three quotations in the second chapter. This is also an instance which tells us the importance of 'sources' in travel narratives. A reference to past narratives becomes a necessary backdrop in which the dramatic elements of history are built up. Here, the author quotes a well-known diarist, an East India company officer and then an oriental traveller. These quotations, in fact, are posited as the contemporary vantage point built on the past. Tindall says that

> The traveller of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, before the major part of transformation took place, commented enthusiastically for the most part, on the shoreline of low, white buildings set amid palm trees which met their sea-wearied eyes (CG: 7).

After building up a dramatic exposition with the help of all these quotations at the very outset of the book, the author sets forth to the narration of Bombay. In this chapter, I shall be using the second edition of *City of Gold* which was published nine years after the first edition was brought out. In the *Introduction* to the second edition (1991), the author narrates the changes she perceives as she revisits Bombay a decade after publishing her first edition. She notices quite a few changes which, she thinks were Bombay's attempts to 'rediscover' and 'recycle' its past. They are:

1. Development spiced with environmental consciousness
2. The colonial edifices that are refurbished
3. The Victorian reformist zest in Bombay.

She also notes the arguments and counter arguments from a section of the public for the cause of development in Bombay.

We can also find that Tindall, as a professional historiographer, becomes quite conscious of her methodology of narrating history. She says that there are two different ways of approaching history. In the "Introduction" written in 1991, Tindall tells us about these two ways to negotiate the writing of history; one is the pessimistic apocalypse-soon outlook and the second is the positive outlook which

incorporates 'change' and possibilities of development towards the progress. According to her, she adopts the second way of viewing history, finding order and meaning in chaos, putting together the fragmented pieces in Bombay's history and negotiating with the murky pandemonium brought in by 'Modernity' in Bombay and trying to conjure a harmony and progress there. Right from the beginning, she takes a very positive approach, as she reacts against stereotypes and clichés that are regressive and anti-development. She comments:

> If Bombay had not continued to be commercially prosperous, if engineering works and petrochemical plants had not been added in this century to its older textile industry, ... then it would not have remained such a Mecca for coming peoples, seeking work seeking money, seeking life itself in an escape from the grinding, near-static poverty of India's rural heartlands. And this 'flood' has been coming, and swelling the town, for a hundred years already: even the image of it has remained constant - that of a potentially dangerous 'encroaching dangerous' tide of humanity, 'swamping' the city with its amenities (CG: 3-4).

The author's appraisal of growth and development seems to be different from nostalgic renditions of the city. But as we proceed further, we can see remnants of nostalgia at the core of the text, as the author/historian harps on the European history of Bombay with a special emphasis on the British. For her, the history of Bombay begins with the Portuguese occupation of the city, and the important departure occurs after the arrival of the British. Tindall leads the target audience on a tour of Bombay as she creates cityscapes through architectural listings,

roads, antiquated automobiles and the imposing British architectural marvels in the city.

Bombay as British handiwork: Narration of colonial histories

Tindall begins the text by saying that the title, *City of Gold*, in itself is an ironic one. By calling Bombay the "city of gold" she clearly indicates that the city hoards the real value of gold, but at the same time she also tells us that the phrase has a different layer of meaning, which evokes an image of the people who have lost their lives in pursuit of the golden value of the city. The trap-like nature of the city, as both alluring and deadly, is encapsulated in the title itself. With this ironic plunge she begins her exploration of the history of the city. She also calls the book *A Biography of Bombay*. A biography is generally written about people, it is the "life history of a person written by someone else."[3] In the book, Tindall personifies the city of Bombay by writing a biography of it. She narrates the birth and growth of Bombay after the arrival of the British. The title also refers to the metaphorical burial of the British memories and dead men. She tells us that the name of the book 'City of Gold' refers to an old adage in Bombay.

> The district of the graveyards was known as Sonapur, which means 'the City of Gold'. Samuel T. Sheppard, who edited *Bombay Times* for many years, thought this evocative name derived from the Hindu saying on the death of an aged person, *tyachen sone jalen* –'he is turned into gold' (CG: 8).

This is also a grim reminder of the fact that in the process of westernising India [read 'civilising' or 'bringing modernity'] many British men have sacrificed their lives for the cause; their efforts have become golden memories or have, in fact materialised into the 'city' of Bombay which we see now. She says that, "Across the forgotten British dead, westernised India and Indian India confront and ignore each other" (CG: 84). This sets the accusative tone of the book; that is, the native ignorance and disregard of the enormity of toils and troubles undertaken by the British in building up the city.

Tindall goes on to narrate the beginnings of Bombay through the images of death, decay and graveyard metaphors. For example, she uses the title and an array of anecdotes from various sources to indicate the early deterioration of the British project [in building up Bombay] which transformed itself into a phoenix-like resurrection later on. She tells us the saga of Bombay from death and decay in the early period to growth and development during British times.

In the 'Introduction' to the second edition of the book, written in 1992, the author takes a cursory look at the cityscapes of Bombay, which are captured after a dozen years of writing the first edition. While doing so, Tindall salvages the remnants of the past from the mansions, palaces and architectural relics that the British left behind. The rise and fall of the British East India Company and the British Raj in India are etched out through historicizing the monuments and mansions, which are the edifices that Britain left behind. Through a circumambulation of the monumental edifices of British times, Tindall narrates the history of British occupancy in Bombay. This is also the history of the durable

nature of colonialism, its edifices, both metaphorical and real, which have withstood 'time and chance.' While she comes across Charles Forbes's house she discovers the illusion of permanence left behind by the British. She says:

> ... it may be that his house in Bombay, which is the one that concerns us now, was also built by his uncle sometime in the 1770s before Charles' arrival. Two watercolours of it, drawn from different angles, have come down to us and are in the Victoria Museum, Bombay. These permit a careful comparison with house still standing today in Forbes Lane near the nineteenth century synagogue, and visible also from the site of the old town walls by the Jehangir art gallery: though much has changed it is undoubtedly the same house, surviving through time and chance (CG: 91).

Along with this narrative for the search of permanence, Tindall also speaks about the debilitating sloth, which had slowly devoured the British and led to their slow deterioration. These qualities, she specifies, are quite uncharacteristic of the British and somewhere there is an undercurrent stating that it was their sojourn in India that had actually induced such sloth. She also comments that after the initial adherence to Indian habits, the British themselves had altered their lifestyles to curb any kind of possible miscegenation taking place.

> Dinner was normally at one as in England, unsuitably so with the hottest months, and was commonly followed by an un-English siesta. (Later generations shifted the main meal to the evening and began to look upon siesta as a debilitating and old-fashioned habit - by which they really

> meant that it was immoral and had been known to lead to another habit that had come to be looked on askance i.e. the fathering of mixed-race progeny) (CG: 89).

In this quotation we can also see the author's emphasis on the strange way in which Bombay reduced the otherwise ambitious and hard-working men of England to a bunch of slumbering lotus-eaters.

> At home in Queen Anne's day supposedly respectable men intrigued drank, gambled and dueled. But out in India, with the restraints of a temperate climate and a relatively organized society removed from them, and numerous irritations and riots imposed, they seem to lose all sense of caution (CG: 61).

The metaphorical proportions of the Medusa-like charm and destructivity that Bombay wielded on the British are also brought out in this quotation. This metaphor of Bombay as the enchantress and destroyer persists throughout Tindall's book.

Comparisons with Europe

As in the case of Murphy, Tindall too, begins with the assessment of Bombay right from its streets. As she witnesses the traffic of Bombay, she realises the developmental lag Bombay suffers in comparison to the West. We find that Bombay is perpetually compared with European models. She recalls the London of the past when she comments on the red buses plying in Bombay: "The nostalgic will, however, be glad to hear that the red London buses of an

increasingly antiquated model are still trundling around [in Bombay]" (CG: p. xvi). Bombay is constantly compared to London and other cities; this is accompanied by the author's views on the *change* and *unchangeability* which coexist in Bombay. Though the author refrains from airing all these opinions directly – as part of the strategy that highlights objectivity - occasionally we can see her slipping into personal comments. For example, "In its present population density and growth rate Bombay thus recalls the past of European cities rather than their present" (CG: 2). These comparisons are made at a mental level and though the author tries to erase herself from the commentary on history, we can see, through out the book, that her voice becomes the most important and prominent one lurking under the cover of 'objectivity'.

> These comparisons with the European cities of yore can be seen as the thread that locates Bombay on the developmental map where it is said to be painfully trundling behind its contemporaries. …Today Bombay, with a density of population about four times that of modern New York, probably resembles more nearly, in social and economic ethos, the New York of hundred years ago. Certainly it contains grinding mills, both metaphorical and actual, it contains wickedness, ruthlessness and heartlessness (CG: 22).

As Tindall brings out the decisive time lag that Bombay suffers in comparison with the western cities, there is also an emphasis on the unexpressed fact that it is after the Indian independence that such a slowing down has actually taken place.

She says that during the time of the Raj, Bombay was unparalleled by its western counterparts.

The first impressions of Bombay are explored in the first chapter “Arrivals”, where the author takes us on a circumambulation of Bombay. It is worth mentioning that this expedition is taken up by the author strictly under the garb of objectivity, but through out we can hear the narration of an oblique guide who takes us back and forth to the past and present of Bombay. The assessment of Bombay begins from there. The first impressions she has of Bombay are her experience of the slums that are juxtaposed with tall edifices of Modernity.

> …. but these are already interspersed with cement apartment blocks, built only a few years back but stained and crumbling in the remorseless climate. The unwary western visitor, with his eyes adjusted to European or North American standards, wonders if these are some of the Indian slums he has read about-until suddenly the blocks are replaced by a patch of waste ground on which has been spawned an indescribable agglomeration of mud-huts, black against the sun, built one upon another, roofed with rush matting, rags, beaten out tin-cans, sheets of dirty plastic or anything else that has come to hand, and pullulating with human and animal life. These are the true *slums*, the sight of which is an unforgettable experience (CG: 5).

She finds this spectacle paradoxical, yet inevitable in the growth of any city. She believes that Modernity in Bombay is an unsavory cocktail, which was first introduced by the British and later on taken on by the Indians.

We can also note that a traveller in Tindall's work is always mentioned as a 'he'; first hand experiences are narrated in the third person singular. The traveller is also automatically conferred the status of a European or North American too. In giving the third person male status to the traveller she is subscribing to the traditional norms of being 'objective' as basically and fundamentally a European/North American male narration, handed down as 'universal.' Tindall narrates the initiation into Bombay to a Western audience as a kind of precarious and queasy experience, which transports the traveller into an awful culture shock. Experience is packaged in a convincing manner, thus strategically positioning the 'third person male' as the axle on which 'objectivity' is construed.

> When the cars stop at traffic lights, the small, almost naked children of the shanties came skipping and hopping dangerously between them to beg insistently at the windows. By the time he [the traveller] reaches Mahim causeway, where the road curves a substantial and permanently odorous creek before entering the dusty, booth-lined main road of Bombay itself, the visitor is apt to feeling queasy, intimidated and culture shocked (CG: 6).

In Tindall's sojourn, she sees the colonial edifices as symbols of the sustenance of the values and systems of the British. Especially, when she sees Hotel Taj, she

imagines the continuation of the British presence in India. We can also find the traveller/historian travelling in time endlessly. She says

> ...for the gardens and the widest flight of steps been in front, where European visitors may have expected them to be, they would today have been ruined by the fumes and noise of Bombay traffic, which has now, c.1980, reached much that state of reckless, undisciplined, hooting crisis that the traffic of Paris had reached c.1930 (CG: 11).

Tindall also finds yawning chasms between the concept of time of the West and the East. Her study is an attempt to comprehend the chronological time, the vertical progress of time, of the city of Bombay. Somewhere she believes that the principle of empirical research in the West has brought in a neat system of time and space, whereas such a system is rather absent in India due to the fact that Indians believe in cyclical time.

> It is the ability, relatively common in England, to date a building roughly by eye, is much rarer in India...By contrast, the Indian observer, even if he was brought up in Bombay, is inhabiting a townscape much of which is, in the deepest sense, alien to the country and its culture: it is much harder for him to classify buildings or place them in a general context (CG: 14).

Tindall, an eminent historian, finds this absolute disinterest in history one of the major characteristics of Indians. She believes that Indians perceive history as an amalgam-whole deeply rooted in the past.

> You may meet an Indian scholar who is a mine of information on some particular aspect of local life or architecture… and be disconcerted to find that he does not appear to site his knowledge in a perspective of time in a way that his European counterpart would. Not infrequently, his chronological perception of Bombay's past seems to be limited to a rudimentary division of Now and Then (CG: 14).

A callow persistence of the author's observation of the time lag and her concern over the colonial relics turning into subaltern tenements can be seen in through out the book.

> On the left, a little nearer the Flora Fountain, next to a grand domed building that once housed a branch of Macmillan, the British publishers, is an equally departmental store - now 'Khadi' but once Whiteway and Laidlow, the place where every new subaltern was sent to kit himself out…. Still today, with its bales of silk and cotton on wooden shelves, its separate cash and parcel desks and its and its superfluity of assistants gazing trance-like across their counters, Khadi distinctly resembles large provincial English drapers, c. 1930 (CG: 15-6).

These antithetical notions by a Westerner and Indian, according to the author, are due to difference in viewing time. She says:

> But, perhaps, it is worth mentioning that in ancient India, before the British began to impose their concepts of historical reality, history was seen as cyclic rather than linear, and that Indian 'Histories' consisted

> largely of predictions about a hypothetical future as if it were the main function of the past. To provide fodder for this guess work (CG: 15).

Tindall speaks in a gentle, disapproving voice about these aspects of history as a terrain which engages various vague surmises and speculations. She constructs Bombay in relation to Bombay, as it is chosen to have had developed due to British efforts at 'civilizing'. Its present is measured against London or other European cities, not against other cities in India. Here, by emphasizing the time lag of Bombay in contrast to its European contemporaries, Tindall tells about the stunted growth of Bombay after the British left. And it is here that she takes an anticipatory bail for 'her' own sense of history, that is, a White woman writing about the history of Bombay. She says: "One cannot see through other's eyes, and like all views, mine is a partial one" (CG: 15). Almost immediately after this, she dismisses the possibility of a pre-colonial past in Bombay.

> But since Bombay, that 'half-caste offspring of London', was largely constructed by westerners looking through western eyes themselves, any other view other than mine would be still partial and perhaps less appropriate. Unlike old Delhi, unlike Ahmedabad and Jaipur or indeed Poona…Bombay has no ancient Indian past (CG: 15).

Here a rather curious phenomenon of history emerges out of Tindall's observation of the 'past'. She acknowledges the prevalence of the past only if it is properly documented. She goes to the extent of being dismissive about the possibility of any pasts other than documented ones. Old Delhi, Poona and

Ahmedabad are considered to have opulent pasts because they have documented histories and their pasts are deeply embedded in either a Sanskritic tradition or a Mughal one. Bombay, with its marshes and its less colourful local fishing folk, could never figure in Tindall's concept of having a 'past.'

The author's perambulations through the city also take her to places where the remnants of a composite culture that cusps both the Indian and Islamic tradition coexists. The sense of antiquity and the aura of 'the-past-preserved-in-a-timeless-capsule' stimulates the author. As she enters those places which are:

> Quintessential, unassuming, catering, poised between the East and the West, the Irani tea shops are peculiar to Bombay; they are the legacy of late nineteenth century immigration into the city, cases of musty tranquility in the city's frenetic life (CG: 16).

As the author takes the readers on a veritable tour of Nagar Chowk, Victoria Terminus, the School of Art [where Kipling was born and at the sight of which she quotes his poem, 'Home' which encapsulates his memories of Bombay], etc, thus juxtaposing the Bombay in the present with the mentally conceived Raj spaces of the past. Moreover she also comments on the changing approaches to British relics in Bombay.

> The British Bombay at its exuberant best, the Sarcenic-Gothic 'palaces' admired by turn-of-century visitors, then despised and even hated between the wars and now, tentatively admired again (CG: 16).

Here, she observes that colonialism has bequeathed oscillating reactions, which swung from admiration to hatred. The best of British, with its mediation of different kinds of art forms, according to Tindall, exists in Bombay. However, the relics are unattended to and are falling into negligent hands. As she observes and gives meaning to the sights that she sees, she witnesses a flurry of untranslatable features in India. She finds the vast expanse called the 'maidan' quite untranslatable into English. Through this, she tries to notify the readers about the 'harmless menace hanging in the air in Bombay' (CG: 17). She is quick to add that the menace is only on the surface level, at a much deeper level, she finds an unmitigated peace and tranquility which cannot be found elsewhere. The sense of menace arises from the feeling of incomprehension the traveller faces when she sees the enormity and variegated propensity of India. This menace becomes a superficial one, not in the least imaginary, once the space of incomprehension is familiarized, understood and later, controlled by the traveller.

In her tour of Bombay, Tindall tries to excavate the etymologies of various place names and their colonial connections. She also delineates the difference between the British, bureaucratic Bombay during the Raj times and the proletarian, native Bombay. She also draws the impact of these differences, which are indelibly fossilized in the geo-political realities of Bombay. She says:

> South of it where we have been walking, lies the British Bombay, Imperial Municipal, Big Business and still today Governmental Bombay, the Bombay of the banks and the Stock Exchange and the other prestigious giant buildings, new and old, the Bombay of western road systems…you

> pass, abruptly, into another Bombay and one which is immediately recognizable as such: the Bombay of the bazaar, the small workshops, the stalls, the rag-trade, the temples, the mosques: the Bombay of the people (CG:19).

Narrating the dynamism of change

She brings in the clear demarcation between the British Bombay that is reflected in the enduring bureaucratic buildings of the place and the people's Bombay, the space built up by the natives, which is distinct glutted with teeming crowds and impermanent artifacts. In the same chapter, Tindall speaks about the topography of Bombay - the quality of the changed and the changing facets. It has to be noted that the dynamism of change is, without nostalgia, seen as something inevitable. Tindall says:

> Both ancient and modern morality emphasise man's negative role as the Destroyer, despoiling Nature, laying waste her bounty, corrupting her innocence, losing Eden, using up - to switch to twentieth century terminology - her ecological resources, polluting streams, replacing fertile earth with sterile industrial blight.... Far from 'burying' landscape he was in fact assembled new landscape, by a series of prestidigitatory tricks, over the course of time, inventing it from the air itself (CG: 24-5).

Continuities, changes, inventions and reinventions of the landscape of Bombay over the ages are discussed by Tindall as part of the inevitable flux in the current of historical time. This also gives us an insight into her outlook on history as a

progressive, continuing and changing phenomenon rather than a regressive one. The metaphorical change of landscape, from the dense inviolate land to that of a city teeming with artifices of human occupation, is another unavoidable movement in human progress. Therefore, with a deft sleight of hand, she dismisses the retrogressive logic of the ecologists who bemoan the declivity of Bombay from a paradise to a fallen concrete jungle.

Similarly, Tindall attempts to analyse the place names in Bombay and bring forth their pasts. Skimming through the history of place names in Bombay, the author transliterates them for the comprehension of the target audience. The place names and their British connections and the corruption of them are described with a considerable ease of story telling. She tries to connect historical instances with the places of Bombay.

> (The picturesque name Old Woman's Island is thought to have been a British corruption of Al Omani's Island of the Arabian sea-people) ….Nelson, for instance, arriving in India as a midshipman of eighteen first saw the 'light of Old Woman's Island near Bombay' at two in the morning on 17th August 1774. His ship had left before the end of 1773, and had taken the long wearisome and hazardous route round the Cape that was then habitual (CG: 27).

Growth of a city: British Bombay

After this, Tindall takes the reader's on a tour of Bombay before the British came. This prelude to the advent of the British is spiced with gruesome stories of Portuguese brutality and cruelty.

> The Portuguese landing in 1509 comes with a tail-ender quotation which speaks about a foraying and murder with a rapacious brutality. "Our men captured many cows and blacks who were hiding among the bushes and of whom the good were kept and the rest were killed" (CG: 29-30).

This introduction to pre-British Bombay, in itself, judges the Portuguese as violent aggressors of the city. After this, in Tindall's narration of the history of India, she appeals for the British subtly, by driving home the fact that India was home to British castaways in the beginning of their occupancy. The Mahrattas, the ruling provincial power, are also shown in a hostile and poor light. The Portuguese, while counted as a prominent power that was involved in the scramble for Bombay before the British came, are again shown in poor light as treacherous betrayers of humanity in Bombay:

> In Bombay, the inhabitants were for the most part preoccupied with their own local struggles, with the Sidis and the Angrias, with the Portuguese (so treacherous and at the same time so tempting to betray!) and with the Mahrattas (CG: 69).

Though there is some explicit criticism of the imperial regime, Tindall tells us more about the 'beneficent' British policies which led to the growth of Bombay.

> Still today cotton is King in Bombay….An irony becomes apparent here: there is a case for saying (as Gandhi did, among others) that the village tradition of the textile manufacture in India was all but destroyed by the imposition of British manufacturing and training methods; but it is also true that the textile trade of Britain in the present day has, in turn, been much affected by the mills and workshops in Bombay (CG: 103).

After narrating the boom of cotton industry and its capitalistic impact on Bombay locating it in the mercantile map of the world, Tindall makes a deliberate effort to whitewash the British role in the grim realities of opium trade that went hand in hand with the cotton trade:

> The opium trade too was a growth industry, opium, extracted from the poppy, was the other Indian commodity that the merchants of Bombay traded with China in return for tea. It was one which, we would now say, they and the British Government itself thrust upon China with brutal and immoral opportunism…. It will be enough to say that Chinese surnames, which are still common among the Parsi community in Bombay today, are at least as likely to be due to the family's one-time involvement in the opium trade with China as they are to cotton trading in that country…. In everybody else's defense it should beaded that the idea that opium and its derivatives were relatively harmless was widely held in nineteenth-century England, at a time when even respectable pillars of society could be found taking laudanum by the decanter-full in the way they might swallow Whisky, tranquillizer or aspirin (CG: 103).

The contrasts of the British with the Portuguese who are portrayed as more brutal conquerors and the exoneration of the British from the opium trade are indicators of the biases that even "objectivity" is susceptible to. She takes the bias one step further when she says that probably it was in the nature of India to corrupt the British who were otherwise. She goes on to talk about the home-abroad comparisons gleaned from various sources, to substantiate and bail out the British from the brutalities committed here.

> Brian Gardener, in his book, *the East India Company* (1945), quotes a homesick company man of the same period as writing: 'At home men are famous for doing nothing; here they are infamous for their honest endeavours. At home is respect and reward; abroad disrespect and heartbreaking. At home is augmentation of wages: abroad is not more than a third of wages. At home is content; abroad nothing so much as grief, cares and displeasure. At home is safety; abroad no security. At home is liberty; abroad the best is bondage (CG: 61).

Tindall unravels various narratives of the destructive facets of India, the temptress, which according to her, could have possibly unleashed mutinous instincts in the minds of the British. For example, while speaking about the pre-British Bombay, imagery of Eden before the fall is quoted from John Fryer-Surgeon of East India Company. Here, this quotation directly refers, in erotic terms, to the violation of the pristine virgin charm of Bombay by invading British men.

> About the house was a garden, voiced to be the pleasantest in India, intended rather for wanton dalliance, Love's artillery, than to make resistance against invading foe. This Garden of Eden or place of terrestrial happiness would put the searchers upon as hard as inquest as the other has done in its posterity… (CG: 32).

By using phrases like "wanton dalliance", "Love's artillery", etc, John Fryer-Surgeon, enunciates a pre-lapserian garden with immense possibilities of erotic exploration. Later, as Tindall speaks about Britain 'chancing upon' Bombay (as the Empire acquired it as the dowry to Charles II) she specifies that it was a mere fortuitous chancing upon a mine of fortune.

> But it was the ending of the Commonwealth and the restoration of Charles II, which provided the opportunity to get hold of Bombay: it was one of the possessions that came to Charles as part of his marriage contract with the Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza. As the poor woman was never able to bear a child, it was the sole enduring advantage to accrue to Britain from the marriage. But what an advantage! (CG: 33).

The author's constant forays into Bombay's interiors remind her of the past, as she gets a strong 'whiff' of the Raj era even in 1980s.

> Yet even today the unfashionable but pleasant streets of Mazagaon retain a strong whiff of its past; not just the eighteenth… and early nineteenth century past when the prosperous British and the Parsis built their out of town houses on its wooded slopes…(CG: 36).

Tindall's emphasis on the vestiges of the British Raj has to be noted. She notices and emphasises that all that the British built up and left exist in India even today, in the form of bureaucratic and mercantile institutions which run the nation. This constant reminder of the 'presences' of the Raj relics is one recurrent feature that can be seen in the book. She notes:

> For many years in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries it had become the Cotton Green, the place where bales of pressed cotton stood about in untidy heaps waiting to be sold and shipped. Anyone wanting to get an idea of what this merchandise … looked like on the Green should visit the present day, rather more organized 'Green' up at Sewri…. Even today, I have been told, bargain transactions are made there as they once were on Bombay Green - by means of a Cabbalistic linking fingers beneath the cloth (CG: 62).

The deliberate use of the Raj nomenclature of places is also noteworthy. For example, Tindall uses the old name Elphinstone Circle with a small footnote that it has been renamed Horniman Circle after an anti-Raj newspaper editor, who had set up his office there. This refusal to use the present name of places is not very frequent in Tindall. Surprisingly, she uses the present names quite generously elsewhere with a few exceptions. But it is interesting to note the fact that Tindall mentions Horniman as an anti-British journalist and he is mentioned with a disparaging tone. This tone which borders on condescension can be read elsewhere in the narrative too.

The skeletons of the past are neatly fleshed out to explicate the specter of the Raj and its role and involvement in building up a system, based on British models. Tindall definitely points out and stresses India's indebtedness to the British Raj in promoting the country's instincts towards modernization and development.

> A country can overthrow its rulers, declare Independence, a municipality can rename the streets after national heroes, cart away the statues of kings and emperors-but the bones of a place, once formed are not to be obliterated. It is the skeleton of the eighteenth century, pre-industrial Bombay, with its neat, separate sections, its wide open spaces, its creeks and promontories, that is still visible here, beneath the exhausted flesh of the modern city (CG:19).

When Tindall stresses on the importance of the British foundations in Bombay ('bones of a place'), it is nevertheless indicated that the flesh that has accumulated slowly in the modern city has been exhausted. In her narratives we can also see implicit and explicit references to the long-term beneficent effects of British rule in Bombay. Probably, the burden of modernity is so much so that the present Bombay is posited as 'exhausted', tired and overburdened. Here, she can also be seen comparing Victorian England to present day Bombay.

> Much of the mid-nineteenth- century Fort is still intact today. As you walk round it, particularly at night when the narrow streets are empty of traffic and the large and terrible Bombay rats frisk in and out of sewers through crumbling drain-heads, it is not hard to believe that you are actually

> walking round a central district of London… in the time of Dickens… here is India's present and Britain's past (CG: 162).

Her discovery of London, though the London of the past, in present-day Bombay imparts a patronizing tone to the narrative. She adds that such chaos and poverty are part of the growing up stage of any country's journey towards development. She also narrates the emergence and growth of Bombay under the sacrifices and toils of the British:

> Figures for Europeans were never hard to obtain: most of them were still company servants (civil, military or marine) and their families, their occupations otherwise - tavern keeper, barber, surgeon, hospital superintendent, etc - were known and listed…. It is obvious that it was with them, their crafts and their trade, that the true growth of Bombay lay (CG: 93).

She justifies the title of the book here, saying that the 'city of gold' was built at the expense of the harrowing and laborious handiwork of the British. She also pontificates loftily as she lightly dismisses the puerile state of India.

> Sensitive Indians, embarrassed by the visible presence of such patent poverty and deprivation, in this, one of the most prosperous cities in India, often seem to imagine that the vast social and financial differences within their society are some special third world plight or more specifically, a function of caste system. They might take a different and less fatalistic view of the matter if they were to realise that Indian cities just exemplify,

> in many respects, an industrialized society at an earlier stage of development than that of the West. It is a nineteenth century style poverty that Bombay suffers … and a nineteenth-century-style prosperity that benefits it, in spite of its own convictions of modernity (CG: 162).

As Tindall narrates the British sojourn in Bombay, from crass mercantilism to power, she quotes from Edwardes, the Muncipal Commissioner in Bombay, who wrote the *Rise of Bombay*:

> Ostensibly, we (the British in India generally) were still no more than merchants actuated solely by the desire for peaceful commerce…than by the Sidi alliances and the course of political affairs in the Deccan. But slowly and surely we were exchanging the role of a purely mercantile community for that of great political power, and the years which elapsed, between 1718 and 1744 were pregnant with events testifying to the alteration of our character (CG: 67).

In Tindall's quotation of Edwardes, she tells us about the British journey from traders to imperialists, we can see the subtle disclosure of a national pride latent in the narration. Mostly the constructive merits of the British are highlighted in this narrative, which is probably fair enough, but it accounts for a lop-sided perspective of history from Tindall's part. It is here, where the author tells us about the importance of the British presence in the building up of Bombay and the sacrifices they had to undergo. While doing so, we see the subtle inference the traveller-historian telling us that the history of Bombay begins at this juncture.

Tindall can be rightfully interpreted as telling us that the beginning of 'Bombay' as a city, according to Western notions, happens with the coming of the British. But we can also see in her historicization a complete erasure of the possibilities of pre-British historical traditions and narratives in Bombay.

The Parsis in Bombay

Tindall also gives a lengthy account of the Parsi contribution to the growth and development of Bombay. The emphasis on the special relationship between the British and the Parsis has to be noted here. Like Murphy's obsession with the Coorgis, who were more easily inducted into Anglicization than any other community, Tindall also mentions how the Parsis were considered 'acceptable' natives in the eyes of the British. She narrates these through the facts collected from various sources.

> One of the many chroniclers of Parsi history…has summed up neatly both the envy and the admiration that the Parsis have aroused in other Indian communities by remarking: "Either the Parsis had the knack of ingratiating themselves in the favour of the Europeans or they were selected by them for their intelligence, business habits and integrity.' It has often been noted that Parsis have a marked capacity for adapting themselves to circumstances, and some commentators have voiced this less kindly by saying that the Parsis most pronounced gift is the imitation, cultural, social and even technological (CG: 72).

Tindall lauds the Parsi adaptability to the British culture as well as their sharp sense of business.

> [W]ith their speedy arrival in Bombay, it was almost as if the Parsis sensed, in the arrival of the British, a unique historical opportunity, that was to be momentous for them in the long run as the chance that had carried them to Gujerat a thousand years ago (CG:73).

The histories of Parsi mansions are also narrated with enthusiasm, as the author somewhere sees the Parsis taking over the arbitrage of the anglicized culture from the British before they left India. The disparities [racial/social] within Parsi/British relationships are also narrated along with the story of mushrooming success of the Parsis. By narrating the rise and the decline of the Parsis, Tindall also tells us that by their close association with the British "the Parsis were in danger of becoming 'a race of educated paupers" (CG: 79).

The decline of the Parsi architectural magnificence and their replacement by the ordinary, paltry, Indian architectural structures are also reckoned with a certain amount of chagrin by the author. This instance, according to her, also gives an insight into how India's innovative modernity clashes with any concept of aesthetical refinement:

> … those grand bungalows and mansions that were built in the nineteenth century at the height of the community's success, … are now ruthlessly knocked down to provide yet another cliff-like slab of glass concrete where once the vultures discreetly bred among the palms and mangoes (CG: 80).

Though the Parsis are talked about with admiration for adopting western ways, she believes that it was their excessive westernization that had actually led to their decline.

> But the real problem, underlying the economic one, is that the very readiness to accept western ways which originally led the race into its position of power and privilege, has in the end led them into a void. The newspaper writer who declared that 'the complete Europeanization of the Parsis is now a mere matter of time' did not foresee that what time would bring in another forty years (CG: 80).

She also feels that Parsis were an anachronism in "Hindu" India:

> It seems to many Parsis that the only route lies back, back into the Indian life style, the Indian habits of eating and sleeping and language that were forsaken two or three generations ago. As if it demoralized by the prospect, the Parsis have a low fertility rate today, and many never marry _ a circumstance unique in Indian society (CG: 80).

This anachronistic state of neither being able to be assimilated into the "Indian" society, nor being able to belong to the British, according to Tindall, led to the decline of a vibrant Parsi era in the history of Bombay. As she speaks of the Parsi culture which was sandwiched between the "Indian" and British ones, we can see her mildly sympathizing with it. Somewhere she believes that with the end of the Raj, the Parsi twilight had also set in. But again, the Parsi history in Bombay before the British arrival and after their departure is conveniently left out. The

readers are left guessing the sad bleak end of those unsaid histories and the continued survival of Parsis in Bombay. Here, Tindall gloats over the merits of the British who patronized their own loyal supporters and as she sings a requiem for them after the British departure, she callously leaves out the continuities with in the present history of the Parsis in Bombay.

By devoting a long chapter to the Parsis, Tindall tells us about their easy adaptability during the British times and their deterioration soon after the Raj. By bringing this into the proper perspective, Tindall tries to tell us the plight of the Parsis as misfits in 'Hindu' India. She assumes that India is synonymous with Hindu culture and by doing so, she reconfirms the logic of the Indian mainstream quite uncritically.

Critical Version of Various Histories

Tindall speaks about the historical errata projected by the Indian historians. Indian historians and their written versions are looked upon with tremendous suspicion by Tindall. She says:

> The three-storied house now on the site, in Cowsji Patel Street in the Fort, is not, at least as two historians have imagined the original eighteenth-century one, but a replacement built by his descendants c.1880 after fire (CG: 73).

We can also see that, though she does not dismiss the probability of the existence of parallel histories narrated from the point of view of other communities, she is emphatic about her subject-position.

> The story of Bombay's development could have been written from the view point of any one of these separate communities, and it would in each case have been written. But it has not been written (CG: 94).

Tindall thinks that in India, prestige and hierarchy are so important that an ordinary person is reluctant to explore her/his past. A middle-class educated Indian's resistance to history [especially, colonial history], according to Tindall, is supposedly her/his reticence to confront and explore her/his own humble past.

> … Indians who have done well in business and moved up the social scale have none of the twentieth century European's pride or interest in the humbler past , and that those whose families have not been so upwardly mobile and have therefore stayed with in bazaars are still less equipped to survey its past and its products…. [They] have got generations confused and telescoped in their account: they do not realize themselves how venerable their house is. It is hardly surprising, then, that where less distinctive houses are concerned, no one seems to know or care what their history may be; they are just 'very old', and it is considered part of the natural course of thing that they will eventually fall and disappear (CG: 95).

These instances of Indian [note that India = Hindu for the author] ignorance of historically significant dates, incidents, etc. are not seen as deliberate, dispassionate apathy. It is understood that this lack of concern is part of Hindu culture. She also mentions that records, presevationism and empirical studies of

any sort are European imports. Tindall concludes that the Indian attitude or disinterest in architecture, history, etc are connected to the religion where there is belief in complete destruction and mortality. This attitude, according to Tindall, is translated to material goods as well:

> ...the Hindu attitude to the body at death (that it should be dissolved in fire and its ashes irretrievably scattered) and to the soul (that it migrates to another form) is applied equally to buildings. The concept that an individual building may, just because it is old, have accrued to itself layers of historical interest and be, in a sense, an embodiment of that long past, seems foreign to Indian ways of thought. Perhaps this is, once again, because Hindus know time to be cyclic, while we know it to be linear (CG: 95).

It is noteworthy that the 'we' here is the Western reader.

Tindall also narrates how Bombay was untouched by the Mutiny of 1857. The way the Sepoy Mutiny is misinterpreted and misrepresented in the Indian textbooks as the first war of independence, is critiqued as a serious lapse on the part of Indian history or historiography.

> No account of nineteenth-century development in India can leave out entirely the Bengal Uprising, the traumatic events of May, June and July 1857, that have been known rather inaccurately to generations of ... schoolchildren as the Indian Mutiny and even more inaccurately to present - day schoolchildren as the First War of Independence. But the

> most significant point about the Uprising as far as Bombay is concerned, is that it did take place in Bengal…and did not effectively touch Bombay at all (CG:168).

We can also see Tindall lauding the brutal and timely suppression of the revolt in Bombay by the British officer, Forjett. She says:

> The police force had only been reformed on the British model three years before; few Europeans were employed in it, and Forjett was understandably keen to make his mark with a natural taste and aptitude for detective work, and a conviction that his role was 'to crush evil in the bud', he ensured that summer, in his own words, that every scoundrel in the town was closely watched and kept in a state of terror. "When on my rounds at night in disguise, I found anybody speaking of the successes of the rebels (in Bengal) in anything like a tone of exultation; I seize him on the spot…" (CG: 168).

She adds that, despite Forjett's brutal suppression of riots in Bombay, he was a man of loftier ideas. We also notice in Tindall, that as she uses sources from memoirs, history books and diaries exhaustively, she scrupulously chooses not to look into Indian historians and biographers. The only ones quoted from India are Parsi narratives. Parsis, according to her, are the ones who took to Anglicization with grace and ease. Other Indian historical narratives, according to her, are either defective or fallacious. Here, the author presumes that the chronological study of past and its logical interpretation are Western imports.

Contradictions In India

Tindall tells us at length about the aberrations and disparities in present day India. One fact is the incapacity of the Indian rural population to get along with urban life, which is westernized externally in terms of technology, development, etc. She says that this divide between the rural and urban India was one phenomenon which had existed right from the Raj times and this had undergone little change over the years.

> Their poverty [in the rural dwellings] was essentially nothing to do with the city; they are rather, imports from India's even poorer countryside. They are like the once Maria Graham saw in 1809, the village huts, and the people who tenaciously occupy them, spreading their washing on nearby railing to dry, cooking their evening meal on tiny charcoal braziers, are ex-country people, attempting to continue life in the big city is the only way they know (CG: 98).

The concept of time and space among Indians is discussed in detail almost immediately:

> ...the mental image that is so familiar to the Europeans of all social levels - that of a town as a network of thoroughfares bisecting denser masses of townscapes - seems to be foreign to the Indian way of thought (CG: 95).

The loss of individuality in Bombay where one becomes part of an inchoate mass is part of this ignorance of systematic space allocation.

> He seeks vainly for the key to city's land-use and development, which he feels must be there and which he gradually realizes does not exist as a master key at all (CG: 96).

Here, the author [who forms the third person singular form reveals to be a White male] tells us that the casualness seen in collecting and disseminating data is primarily latent in the Hindu mindset.

Narratives of Women

After perceiving the Indian mannerisms and Indian attitudes towards history, Tindall chooses the narratives of White women to historicize Bombay. Dedicating a space for the narratives of women is indeed a significant departure from traditional historiography. Her main sources for historicizing Bombay from women's point of view are taken from travellers during the Raj period like Maria Graham, Emily Eden, Emma Roberts, Mary Falkland, Mrs. Sidney Cherry, Mrs. Postans, etc. The history of Raj women in Bombay is elaborated neatly by giving a specific space for British women in Bombay. Tindall traces their arrival raising the fact that at a certain point in time, miscegenation became unacceptable in the company. She speaks about the subtle stigmas that co-existed with cross cultural relationships with the help of a few examples:

> [Colonel Skinner] was a distinguished scholar and ended his career as a companion of the Bath, though he in turn married an Indian Lady and their large family were said to be 'quite black'. Charles Forjett, born in Madras about 1810, whose origins are obscure, but who rose to become

> Chief of Police in Bombay in the 1850's and finally Municipal Commissioner, must have been a Eurasian, though by mid-nineteenth century such a fact was no longer freely mentioned (CG: 110).

This section is generously peppered with the narratives of Maria Graham, Mrs. Sherwood, Lady West, Lady Falkland, Mrs. Postans, etc. The class structure, the experiences of these women, their first impressions on encountering the 'dread of heathenism', etc. are portrayed vividly in this chapter.

She unearths diaries, memoirs and other documents of personal narratives from the recesses of oblivion. They are analysed and assigned an important space in history. She also documents the narratives of Englishwomen from different walks of life, and different classes and their observations on India are given as much importance as those of the male texts. She brings in the 'first ladies' as well as the 'inferior women' into the picture, to look at their versions of life in Bombay. She begins with the story of Eliza Draper, probably the only woman associated with eighteenth century Bombay, her possible stale relationship with her husband, her elopement with her lover, her various other affairs and her relative obscurity and poverty at the time of her death, aged thirty five. Tindall says that it was the double standards of the Anglo Indian society of her time that led her to this end. While the society naturalized male liaisons outside marriage, it had still sigmatised women who sought solace outside. The travails of women who ventured out to curb the increasing population of Eurasians are again narrated with the help of death metaphors. How beauties like Elizabeth Rivett and

Charlotte Bellasis died untimely deaths in Bombay is narrated with a necrophilic obsession.

The stories of the 'under bred' and over-dressed ladies in Bombay are narrated along with their comments on the climate, the houses/bungalows which accommodated them, their habits, coterie of friends, their activities, quarrels, enlistments, enlightenments, etc. Tindall also tries to capture the derogatory tones in which a memsahib's venture was described by the fellow British men. She quotes Thomas Hood's poem 'Going to Bombay' which captures the note of genteel vulgarity and determined opportunism inherent on such a venture[4].

She finds other similar quotes which are offensive to the women who come in search of their husbands to India. She says : "By late 1860s and 70s 'the Fishing Fleet', as the annual influx of hopeful girls cruelly came to be known, had overfished the waters, and many had to return home as virginal, or at any rate as unmarried, as they had come…"(CG: 139). Tindall narrates these unspoken agonies of the 'memsahibs' becoming the baggage prop of the Raj machinery with latent sarcasm and irony directed against the empire.

After that we see that Tindall's neutral tone is unable to conceal nostalgia for the Raj. This can easily be discerned while Tindall lingers over some 'unchangeables' and 'unchangeabilities' in Bombay with a relishing, laudatory fervor. When she sees the horse cart, she rues with nostalgia:

> …. the gharry (Victoria) became a general form of transport in the 1870's- Many of these same old Victorias, complete with leather hood and

> buttoned upholstery, are circulating in Bombay even today: they are cheaper than taxies.. Their horses are well groomed but thin. As for their oxen and their carts, they are still to be seen, even in the centre of the city, among the hooting motor traffic (CG: 122).

The notion of an 'unchanged' India since the British times to the present is substantiated by the author's statement that, though poverty and deprivation look enormous to western eyes now, once upon a time, in the past it did not look offensive at all because the same poverty and deprivation were seen in London as well. But Tindall adds that, "…India has not changed in this respect whereas the western world has, and that is why we are now struck by a poverty which our ancestors took for granted" (CG: 142).

While she harps on the time lag, she also gazes upon and intercepts the remnants of Britain in present Bombay. The author not only exhibits an enduring nostalgia, but she is also critical of the fact that present day Bombay dwellers do not know the value and the importance of these monuments.

> How many people in present day Bombay realise that this place, with its thick, lumpy outer wall like that of some country stronghold of the remote past, still survives unchanged? It is on no one's tour-itinerary, yet it should be, for it is at least as characteristic of 'old Bombay' as the Mint and the 'Townhall', two buildings really shown to visitors as the oldest examples of British architecture (CG: 123).

She also waxes eloquent and highlights the consequences of the British settlement which had in turn led to Bombay's growth as a 'heavy investment' city. This section, in fact, focuses on that aspect of Bombay, conceived and fostered by the British, which had made it the 'urbs prima in India'. To illustrate this aspect, she narrates the growth of cotton industry along with that of opium, the steady growth [and later the decline] of Parsis, the construction of Bombay through its architectural monuments, its theatre, etc.

While doing this it is noticeable that in certain places, Tindall tries to bail out the British. This litany on Raj and its influence on Bombay as the primary urban space in India are not altogether spelt out without any criticism of the British Raj itself. We can find tidbits of a critique of certain elements within the British Raj which had nurtured intolerance, racism, prejudice, etc.

Tindall says that it was in the zest of proselytizing that these prejudices became more obvious and prominent.

> But it was also a fact that the rising tide of Evangelical Christianity … bred a new horror of heathenism, a conviction that an absence of belief in Christ must express itself by a general 'moral turpitude' (CG: 142).

Simultaneously, one can also see the author conferring Biblical imageries of exile, separation and decay to Bombay, during the Anglo-Indian times.

> Exile and separation - an endlessly repeated but usually silent minor tragedy of the Anglo-Indian experience - was every bit as heart-rending in its way as the more dramatic fact of mortality (CG: 155).

Here too the author seeks the romance of the Raj, the tale of exile, separation and decay. Here, during her peregrinations, two contradictory yet interrelated strains of Bombay are neatly laid out by the author.

> On the one hand there is a note of pride, of burgeoning imperialist hubris combined with innocent romanticism (Urbs Prima in India, The Eye of India… [B]ut this period also marks the beginning of persistent complaints - of Bombay's noise, dirt, overcrowding and general unmanageability - which have not ceased to this day. British Metropolitanism was in the 1860s, 70s and 80s, imported to Bombay, complete with water pipes, gas pipes, paving authorities, sewage disposal authorities, tramlines, parks, apartment blocks both grand and squalid and every other amenity of western civilization, but imported along with them was something morally and aesthetically deplorable about the whole concept of a great city (CG: 172).

While she winds up her history of how Bombay rose as a city in the hands of the British, she also states that the impact of the 'civilizing mission' had been twofold. As monuments and configurations of a metropolis had been set up, simultaneously there had been the violation of the natural order of living in Bombay which resulted in chaos and mayhem. She believes that since the British

left, a stasis in the development seeped in, and hence the time lag in development vis-à-vis the Western counterparts.

Finally she ends her book and reaches the culmination of her travelling through the past through the present.

> As the train finally passes out into the open countryside, and the mountains of the Deccan rise up clear and near small groups of palm roofed houses appear in the distance, identical to those which, three centuries ago, greeted the traveller standing on the deck of his sailing ship in the sheltered, natural harbour of Bombay (CG: 205).

In her epilogue, Tindall remarks that Bombay has actually grown to be a 'real' town substantiated by its own worth, and its desertion by the British parentage did not lead to its destruction, but a slowing down of its development process.

> It has sometimes been said that nothing about the British conduct of their Empire became them like their leaving of it. Certainly, in the case of Bombay, the British did not leave an orphaned place, an illegitimate child that could not fend for itself. Bombay, at any rate, could flourish without them; she no longer needed them… (CG: 206).

The inevitability of the ending of colonialism that heralded a new change is brought to our focus by Tindall in her concluding remarks.

When we analyse Tindall's perspectives on history we can observe certain features:

1. History begins with documented history, undocumented history is dismissed so much so that local myths or legends or any oral traditions, which embrace local or parochial history of the marginalized classes, are not talked about at all. According to Tindall, Bombay does not have a past till the arrival of the Portuguese and later the British. This approach towards 'history' is unabashedly justified by quoting the 'subject' position of the historian herself that serves as an anticipatory bail.
2. The history of Bombay is thoroughly investigated and Tindall calls her book a 'biography'. Human elements are bestowed on Bombay as the city, which is called the 'half-caste offspring of London' (CG: 15). The whole procedure of historical investigation is like that of a biographer writing a bildungsroman, etching out the birth and the developmental stages of a human being.
3. The history of Bombay is illustrated from the British point of view, this nevertheless contains a subtle self-critique of the British as well, though the author/historian does not come off with it completely.
4. She narrates history with an unusual zest for presevationism but curiously these preservationist concerns are limited to the conservation of 'colonial' monuments in Bombay.
5. Tindall tries to bring out the participation of White women in colonial history and their contribution to the growth of Bombay. As she brings in the narratives of women she tries to bring in stories of

women from different walks of Raj Bombay. The narratives of White women in the Raj are salvaged from memoirs, travelogues autobiographies, etc, and are used as sources of historical narration. They are seen as comparable with the canonical texts of history written by men.

6. The author adopts the objective manner of narrating history, where she tries to erase her persona through out the book. We can hardly find her commenting on anything anywhere, but we can see her reinforcing her subject position as a woman/ traveller/ White/ historian.
7. The juxtaposition of the past and the present offers an interesting phenomenon because the author primarily excavates Bombay's present as the most fertile ground to salvage the past.
8. Contemporary view of history in India, as projected in the school curricula, etc, is criticized.
9. She speaks about Bombay's continuities though she also speaks about the stasis and unmanageability of the city after the British had left Bombay.

Autobiographical meanderings on History: Georgina Harding's *Tranquebar*

The second text that I have chosen for analysis is Georgina Harding's *Tranqebar: A Season in South India*. Georgina Harding travels to Tranquebar, in Tamil Nadu, to trace out the history of Danish colonization and the process of

proselytism and its impact in that region. In sharp contrast to Tindall, Harding employs the first person narrative to historicise the place. In the exposition itself, Harding tells us about the pervious 'connection' that she had with India through an Irish-Indian called Matthew Maguire. This can be seen as part of one of the strategies of Place Fixation, which was discussed in the first chapter. She also speaks about her exposure to the place, through the source books by 17th century travellers like Olafsson, especially from *The Life of Jon Olafsson, Traveller to India*.

In the introductory chapter, Georgina Harding tells us about herself as a traveller-mother [like Murphy] about the precautions taken as a traveller, the impending dangers ahead, etc. We can also see Harding emphasising her subject-position as a traveller/mother/writer. She tells us the reason why she wanted to get away from London. For her an escape from the drab realities of London and regaining her mobility is synonymous with her discovery of a writing space which she wishes to coalesce with her identity as a travelling mother.

> I had been feeling trapped in London. I was mother of a baby whose squawls bounced between the walls of a terraced house. It was a fifteen-minute walk to the park, a dull stroll between grey houses and through waves of diesel fumes. I dreamt of freedom from buggies and supermarket trolleys. I would rediscover my mobility. I might even find gentle childcare and have time to write. My son Tom would learn to walk barefoot, to play with his junk-heap of plastic toys, and exclaim at elephants instead of police cars (TASSI: 14).

To rediscover her mobility, the author longs for a getaway from the claustrophobic rooms in London; she longs to get away from the blaring traffic to a more "natural" world and to enjoy the liberation from the artificialities of London life. Thus the author embarks on a journey to India. The concern she has for her travelling companion, her baby Tom, is also very well illustrated here [We can make a close analogy with the condition of Murphy, a travelling mother too, who also refuses to be tied down by any skeins of biological compulsions or domesticity]. Here again, in her longing for mobility we can find the woman's urge to break the norms of conventions [dictated by gender, domesticity, etc.] that pin her down and her longing to reach 'out' of her binding circumstance to achieve her ultimate goal of journeying into her own self. We can also see the author's urge to break off from the confines of a Western civilization and search out wider spaces to retrieve her freedom and mobility from the confines of womanhood and home.

We can see in the introductory chapter, the author giving a prologue to the place that is to be visited, precautions taken by the traveller, the woman's urge to surge forth into a more expansive, 'natural' world and also her concerned ruminations over the impending dangers waiting ahead of her during the time of the journey.

The second chapter of her book, 'The Colony' begins with a quotation from Jon Olafsson, the 16th century Danish traveller, who tells us about a 'heathen king' who had offered them a pleasant and smooth place by the sea. We understand that Harding, like Tindall, is also trying to explore the past and narrate the present through her experience of travelling. Right at the beginning she assumes

the role of a custodian of a civilization that is lost in the mayhem of the ignorance and apathy of the present day Indians.

The author observes that the mutilation and erasure of the past are matter of fact incidents to Indians. She is as pained as Tindall when she observes the callous attitude of the new town planners in India, who take little interest in conserving and salvaging the monuments of the past. She projects this attitude by reproducing fragments of a conversation that she had with an Indian acquaintance:

> "There was an arch here, Danish. In the course of some renovations we had to move it. We would of course have preferred to keep it in one place but it was broken."
>
> This regret was mild. The house was where he lived. He saw no need to question its history (TASSI: 29).

The author also becomes mildly critical of the Indian obsession with the present and their insensitive and complete obliteration of the colonial past in a rather mindless manner. She continues:

> He became animated when he talked of business and of concrete things, of building of the new mosque, of the shipping trade…of local scandals… These after all were the things that mattered (TASSI: 29).

In a similar way, the Indian treatment of colonial history is talked of in a rather critical manner. The ordinariness which creeps under the history, and the

paltriness into which monuments peter out, etc, are also talked about with utter dismay and disbelief.

> Later, in one of the cemeteries, picking a path through thorns, treading wearily for fear of hidden snakes, I found the grave of one of Muhldorff's daughters, Maria Barbara Stevenson, and close by those of her two sons, major E.B. Stevenson and Willoughby Carter Stevenson. On the hot stones of their tombs someone had placed cakes of cow dung to bake into cooking fuel (TASSI: 29).

There are places in her narrative where the author also feels that, may be it is her subject position as a European traveller must be the reason for attaching a lot of value to the Tranquebar, which was just like any other ordinary place in India. She is also acutely aware of her agency as someone who would unearth History and uphold the value of past to an insensitive crowd of Indians.

> Perhaps it was only the European eye which saw in Tranquebar a special place. Much of it was no more than a dusty shamble indistinguishable from a thousand other South Indian villages (TASSI: 29).

She begins by narrating the importance of the Danish presence in Tranquebar; more than stressing their ascendance to power and the zenith and nadir of the Danish colonial rule, Harding highlights the process of proselytism there.

> For more than two hundred years Tranquebar was the chief Danish settlement in Asia. It was here where the first protestant missionaries

> landed in India, off a Danish ship. And it was the birthplace of Catherine Wertee, later Madam grand, Madame Talleyrand and princess of Benevente (TASSI: 31).

Harding's ruminations on colonialism are also remarkably similar to those of Tindall. She too speaks about the callous neglect of colonial monuments and the lack of concern for history.

> At most of the minor settlements, little now remained. A fort still at Sadras, walls of narrow red bricks and within them goats and Dutch tombstones. Something like a classical temple on the beach at Karikal, a long bungalow with columns all around, perhaps a customs house. At Porto Novo, only a fisherman casting his net into a grey lagoon, and four women walking into water in their saris, wading to an island. At Tranquebar… colonial plans show whole streets that have been washed away just to the north. The last building now before the water was a fourteenth- century temple, itself half demolished… waves beat against the rubble, breaking over fallen blocks of granite among the smashed brick, carved pillars, lintels and stalactite brackets of lost shrines. Flotsam collected them and men panned the wet sand for gold and coins (TASSI: 32).

Metaphorically landscapes of the ruins, relics overridden by nature, are looked upon with a kind of concern which verges on nostalgia for a pristine past. She implies subtly that Tranquebar exemplifies a civilisational saturation, with all the

central and essential edifices overgrown by nature's tirade. The ruins over human structures are so well projected to imply this point of stagnation.

> At the entrance, on the Mayuram road, the old iron gates were pinned open by rampant bougainvillea. Only one section of the house was habitable, of the two storeys, oddly bow ended. Thaiub Ali said the design was his father's own invention, 'half egg shape.' Around this, remnants of a classical building stood strangled in creeper: a pilaster supporting a strip of shattered architecture, a line of six arches that must once have opened on to a verandah and now formed a boundary to the backyard where chickens pecked beside the well…(TASSI:41).

She also notices the colonial shadows lurking in the monuments that the Europeans had left behind, casting a sense of permanence of their presence in Tranquebar.

> A smaller staircase inside must have led to the third floor balcony, narrow beneath the overhang of the tiled roof. Looking back at the village from the beach, this house stood away from the rest, yellow, decaying, anonymously official, the shadowy upper storey rising clear above the palms (TASSI: 48).

Along with the sense of permanence, the sentiment of decay is also portrayed rather nostalgically through this narrative. Here it is interesting to notice another account where the slow growth of the native huts along the colonial edifices is related as a revolting encroachment. Harding says:

> The Indian village sprawled over the area of the colonial town, so orderly in Danish engravings, laid out as it was on broad axes, enclosed behind glacis and hexagonal bastions. The most densely populated section was now the labyrinth of the fisher people's huts north of the original line of the walls, while the center of the old town were places where the European street plan dissolved into path and ticket, and butterflies hovered in the light between the creepers and thorn bushes (TASSI: 51).

This slow deterioration of systems of the Empire, be it British or Danish, including buildings, are seen as catastrophic developments that add to the chaos that is already latent in India. This nostalgia can be read in both the women historians. Along with this we can also see personal histories entwining with the main historical narratives. These are salvaged from the tit bits of interviews that materialise from the author's contacts with the inhabitants of Tranquebar.

While she looks at the colonial architecture reclaimed by the natives after the sunset of colonialism, Harding muses on the extent of decomposition that has eaten into the state of permanence. The author's concern over the colonial administrative edifices giving way to a kind of lethargic mismanagement can be noticed below. This is in a way her concern over the deterioration of the bureaucracy in India. She implies that it was one of the systems that has been established by the colonial rule, which is slowly falling apart in India.

> A neoclassical Customs house looked out across the main harbour road and the railway line to empty yards and a locked passenger terminal. In

> the old administrative district, the law courts had adjourned for lunch. In the shade of a huge banyan before the driveway, clerks in white shirts and pressed trousers picnicked from tiffin cans. A modest circle of women typists ate thin tiffin on the floor of an office upstairs, between the rows of heavy wooden desks with thin black typewriters and papers weighted with stones. In the main courtroom, a picture of Gandhi hung crooked on the wall behind the judge's bench; and a wire mesh spanned the ceiling beneath the dome to keep out the sparrows that flew in through a glassless lantern (TASSI-46).

As Harding narrates the past through the present history, she relives the colonial world through historical narration, by bringing in the aspect of involvement. Hers, we can see, is a passage in time, a passage from the colonial memories to the postcolonial realities. We can also see Harding dealing with two Indias simultaneously - the India that is embedded in memory through sources, romances, etc, as well as the India seen from the point of view of the traveller's subjective reality as she explores the place fixed, that is Tranquebar, through travelling.

Harding is also critical of the Indian attitude toward their own history of Independence. She observes the same negligence and lack of taste in preserving memories with disenchantment and dismay.

> When at last we left, we saw Gandhi's monument, a crude cone of concrete topped with a budding lotus, painted in ice-cream colors. A chain with

> broken links symbolized the fight for freedom. A few blades of grass in the surrounding enclosure stood for a lawn (TASSI: 39).

In the very same manner, an average Indian's ignorance of geographical spaces is also looked upon with disappointment by the author.

> He unlocked his church. It was fine and solid, barrel vaulted with dark stained woodwork, gallery, Corinthian columns, and grandiose pulpit. He said it was founded by Danish missionaries. 'Did you not see the tablet on the wall when we entered?' We looked again, told him that the inscription was Dutch, not Danish- after all it was the Dutch who had held Nagapattinam. 'So is it Dutch?' Denmark is not Holland? What is Denmark then? (TASSI: 45-6).

The author tells us that Tranquebar and its neighbouring places had a taste of Europe, for it had a jumbled colonial past. She is drawn by the composite nature of the town that tells a thousand tales of various colonial presences. But she is also mildly irritated by the straitjacketing or the interchangeability of the Europeans.

> Europeans were interchangeable in this town, on this coast. As he puts it, 'there were the Portuguese and then the Dutch; then the French drove the Dutch out and then you British drove out the French' (TASSI: 46).

It is from these kaleidoscopic fragments of colonial memory that the author tries to salvage the history of European presence in Tranquebar. The author also

ruminates on the unbridgeable gap between the past and the present, as she observes the spaces between the colonial centres and the native one's in Tranquebar.

> The town had empty spaces - the gap between the native and the colonial centers, old and new town, somehow never quite filled in India, left a no man's land as between Old and New Delhi (TASSI: 41).

Personal narratives of history, which materialize in Harding's works are also worth noting. For example, she historicizes the composite nature of Tranquebar by recording the stories of the inhabitants there.

> 'Uncle Tom married a girl from Mangalore and had three children but he went the wrong road. He wandered off straight and narrow. Took to drink and worse…' (TASSI : 47).

For Harding, coloniality in Tranquebar is a lived experience. Its more than what she reads and gleans from sources, art museums, etc. It is her personal interaction with the place that builds the skeins of a historical narration in the book. We can also notice that Harding dwell quite a bit on Christianity in Tranquebar. More than on the history and politics of colonialism, Harding chooses to dwell on Christianity, and its effects on Tranquebar. In the episode called 'Jesuswami', Harding gives us a picture of the proselytism and introduces us to the Danish missionary who was behind it. In this chapter, she passes through the colonial buildings, monuments, statuettes, etc and by tracing their history she inscribes the story of conversions into Christianity in Tranquebar.

> A monument to Tranquebar's first accredited missionary stood on a corner of the parade ground, in the Garden of the Lutheran teacher training college: a bust of a portly eighteenth-century figure set on a concrete pedestal with a green metal parasol over his wigged head. His name, Bartolomeus Ziegenbalg, was given on the plaque below.... I had imagined Ziegenbalg thinner, tight lipped. All accounts have him as a difficult character: zealous to an extreme, intolerant and bad tempered, ...He was voluble in his disgust at his fellow Europeans at Tranquebar and dismissed the majority of the natives as lazy and indifferent, reserving respect only for Brahmin pundits... (TASSI: 55-6).

She interviews the converts, tries to meet an evading pastor of the Lutheran Church and the present day missionaries, calls on the catholic institutions and the schools run by both the Protestant and the Catholic missionaries and visits shrines and important pilgrimage centers to estimate the impact of Christianity among the new converts.

The early and present missionary encounters of the Hindu 'other' and the cultural complications that conversions traversed are also glossed over in this chapter in a rather muted manner. The curiosity of a traveller eager to dig out the roots of Christianity can be seen in this chapter, as the author ventures into the religious disposition of the native converts. In a very gentle manner, Harding also brings out the anachronistic displacement of the converted Christians who are immersed in a predominantly Hindu Culture. The author observes with curiosity

the Christian co-option of the Hindu culture and customs. She observes an ardent Lutheran Christian Mr. Wilson and his Hindu mannerisms:

> Around dawn every morning of the week, Wilson went up on to the roof of his house to pray, like a Hindu, in the open air. With the example of Hindu puja all around them, the elaborate private worship of Hindu gods, many of the Indian Christians were monastic in their devotions (TASSI: 62).

She also witnesses and accounts for the anachronisms that are found among the converted Christians of Tranquebar, who she thinks are caught in the wave of 'cross-religious-pollination'.

> The New Jerusalem Church was festooned with chains of yellow daisies and by the pulpit a casuarina stood in for a Christmas tree. The main service had been held late on Christmas Eve. It was moving, Thambiah's voice becoming rich and sonorous from the pulpit, the dark air weighed with the scent of garlands in women's hair and of the frangipani tree in the churchyard, the veiled head gently bowed over joined hands. The light Indian manner renewed the familiar European words and gestures. But I couldn't help seeing mimicry in it. They sang 'Silent Night' beautifully, in Tamil, and they haven't even seen snow. Like perfectly schooled children, the missionaries' dusky lambs (TASSI: 73).

While witnessing the Christmas service the author can hardly hide her surprise at the irony the situation calls for. She finds it mildly difficult to visualize a

completely different cultural phenomenon, which is Western, being packaged to suit the religious ethos of people who belong to a different culture.

A traveller herself, Harding also traces the travelling patterns of Indians, and she notes that Indians hardly ever travel for pleasure. She also comments on the enterprise of commercial pilgrimage in the Basilica of Vailankanni, which is near Tranquebar.

> From the car park before the basilica, right to the sea's edge, the streets were filled with fried fish and ice cream stands, and stalls selling paraphernalia of seaside pilgrimage – an extraordinary combination of the sacred and the profane, rosaries, sunglasses, seashell mementoes, religious medallions, beach balls and pingpong bats. Beggars were inevitable as hawkers, and pilgrims were systematically harried from the moment they arrived. Women, children, legless and blind men, old men and orange-robed sadhus, worked between ranks of cars and buses, then along the railed queues their preys were trapped as they bought the obligatory tickets and candles. Business was so good that they had set up their own stalls offering small change. Neat towers of coins were lined up on a tabletop… (TASSI: 75).

The pilgrim centre nurturing its business counterpart is reckoned with great distaste as the author refers to the whole thing as the mixing of the sacred with the profane. She also brings out the predatory nature of business in the pilgrimage centre. In her interviews with various pilgrims, she sees the easy

matrimony of spirituality and materialism. She draws our attention to the commercial nature of the pilgrim centre by drawing our attention to a few dedications inscribed in English:

> Thanksgiving to Our Lady of Vailankanni for all the favours granted to me. Bless me and my family. With your grace I passed the MBBS and am now a doctor. Bless me in the upliftment of my career. As a token of my reward I keep this silver stethoscope at Your humble feet.
>
> Dr (Miss Bhanumati Jayaraman, MBBS, Calcutta) (TASSI: 78).

With these narratives the purely mercantile side of spiritualism is highlighted with a tinge of irony, which is subtle and undercover. In the same vein as in Tindall, who takes an objective overview of Bombay, Harding also locates Tranquebar as the place fixed in her exploration of India.

In these two narratives of history, on the one hand Tindall sees developments and continuities in history whereas Harding opts for the view of history gathered from the ruins. Both verge on nostalgia because both look at the colonial past in a laudatory manner. Tindall looks at a city, emphasizing its developmental stage, whereas Harding looks at the small town of Tranquebar and narrates the state of historical stasis the place is in. But both of them can be seen asserting their roles as custodians of the past colonial histories. It is noteworthy that while Tindall is mildly critical of colonial atrocities, Harding hardly ever mentions them. She more or less passes over the modernizing effect of Christianity with an aside that

it is a religion that is displaced in Hindu India or an India that is Hindu by culture.

These authors, who are travel/writer/historians, try to represent the objective and subjective 'truths' they see, hear and read through the process of cultural relativism. There is always a standpoint of history from which they embark on the process of historical narration. It invariably begins with the commencement of colonialism in the place fixed. Undocumented or documented histories of the place fixed are completely debunked or ignored. The local histories of the place, myths, oral histories, etc are not considered at all in their historical enquiries. It can also be observed that the authors' emphasise their subject positions, rather apologetically [probably due to their colonial histories] during their historical enquiry. As they emphasise their identity as a white/woman/traveller/historian, little do they doubt the possibility of written history being untrue or relatively true. Their own identities, personal interests and convictions clash with those of the various dimensions of historical truths. Under an 'objective' veil, truth becomes a lopsided and monolithic entity that obscures other historical perspectives. Here, in both the texts, the authors use the metaphor of colonialist beginnings as the beginning of growth and development. The point of departure is that of the phase of modernity which was a gradual consequence of colonialism. One the one hand, Tindall writes about the growth and development of colonialism whereas on the other, Harding speaks about conversion as that standpoint of history which had ushered in progress. They also perceive the present day condition as stasis, though Tindall perceives it from a positive,

developmental point of view and Harding has an "apocalypse soon" outlook. She clearly airs her disappointment with the religion that had been spread by the missionaries. She notices the oddity of this European religion in India and rues over the fact that spirituality has deteriorated into crass mercantilism. In both these women writers we can see an underlying film of nostalgia. This nostalgia for the Raj is in the form of the colonial edifices, bureaucracy, administration, religion, etc.

This chapter encapsulates how Gillian Tindall and Georgina Harding travel in time and space simultaneously unearthing histories. In the next chapter we can see how personal narratives and experiences conjure an India for the reader.

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[1] See Chapter I, "Introduction". P. 20.

[2] "My Lord Brouchner and Sir Edmund Pooly carried me down into the hold of India Ship, and there did show me the greatest wealth lie in confusion that a man can see in the world. Pepper scattered through every chink, you trod upon it: and in cloves and nutmegs I walked above the knees: whole rooms full. And silk in bales… as a noble sight as ever I saw in my life".

[3] *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[4] *By Pa and Ma, I'm daily told*
To marry now's my time
For though I'm far from old
I'm rather in my prime.
To say while we have any sun,
We ought to make our hay-
And India has so hot a one,
I'm going to Bombay!
My cousin writes from Hyderapot
My only chance to snatch, and says the climate is so hot,
It's sure to light a match.
… Farewell, farewell, my parents dear,
My friends, farewell to them!
And oh, what cast a sadder tear
Goodbye to Mr. M! _
If I should find an Indian vault,
Or fall a tiger's prey,

Or steep in salt, its all his fault,
I'm going to Bombay! (CG: 138)

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Chapter IV

Of Lovers and Grandmothers:
Knowing the Land through Personal Lives

In the previous chapter, we have seen how the past is recounted by women travellers, and how invariably, the colonial past emerges in their narration. We have also seen the remnants of a latent nostalgia that is harboured in these narratives. The present chapter deals with three texts which tell us about the personal lives of three authors and their sojourn in India. Here, I shall be dealing with the way in which travel and personal life merge in the land which is travelled. The texts that have been chosen for study are Sarah Lloyd's *An Indian Attachment*, Imogen Lycett Green's *Grandmother's Footsteps* and Jill Lowe's *Yadav: A Road Side Love Story*. These books were written over a period of three decades. *An Indian Attachment* was written in 1984, *Grandmother's Footsteps* in 1994 and *Yadav* in 2003.

Here, I shall be dealing with how India is internalised in the travellers' minds through their experiences gauged from their close personal relationships. Relationships with other human beings in the texts become a crucial point in each author's understanding of India. We can see that the authors explore the geographical terrains of India through the men and women who literally become impersonalised as India. Their experiences of various emotions - love, hate, despair, confusions, and incomprehension - form sequences that leave behind imprints of their knowledge of the country which they travel. Here, the most important factor is the strange way in which the dissimilar realms of the private and the public combine and merge in an astounding fashion to shape their understanding of the 'inside' and 'outside' spaces simultaneously.

I shall be looking at how relationships enhance the whole gamut of personal experiences of the traveller/writer and how they provide her with the wisdom of hindsight in their writing. These spaces of experience, along with the power [and sometimes lack of power] enjoyed as a white female, confer on the travellers an authority which at certain points dovetails into self-critique and scrutiny. The travelling woman, with her own package of knowledge and expertise, becomes the sole authority of the travelled realm as well as the originator of meanings in it. In all the travel narratives, experiential authority takes leverage and control, for the 'I-have-experienced-it/seen-it-all' rhetoric dominates the accounts.

We can also see that the exploration of the other through relationships is a method of exploring one's own femininity. That is, it is an exercise that emphasises one's subjectivity and the role of experience in understanding the other. In the books I am analysing, we can see the writers exploring their intimate physical relationship with a person who is closely associated with India. In the case of Sarah Lloyd and Jill Lowe, they fall in love with Indians who serve as the *sine qua non* of their understanding of India. Imogen Lycett Green lost her grandmother, Penelope, in Khanag valley in Himachal Pradesh and she pursues the trails left behind by her grandmother to salvage the legacies of Penelope's travel patterns and knowledge and to discover what 'real' India is all about.

Sarah Lloyd: *An Indian Attachment*

The book begins with an anecdote from Lloyd's personal life which is quite 'Kiplingesque' in nature. The author endows this scrap with a touching foreword

reads thus: 'For Jungli, who couldn't see the point.' This is followed by fragments of Jungli's and Lloyd's dialogue:

> 'What are you writing now?'
> 'About our life in this hut.'
> 'What does that bit say then? (pointing)
> 'It describes how you took me to see the snake in front of Sitaram's shop.'
> 'Who'd be interested in that?'
> 'Some people might.'
> 'Well they'd be off their heads. I've told you before; you are just messing up good paper.'(IA: Foreword)

Right in the epigraph, the problems of cross-cultural interactions and relations are poignantly brought out by Sarah Lloyd, before she begins to narrate the story of her amorous alliance with Jungli, a *Nihang* [Sikh warrior] whom she meets in India. This meeting becomes the turning point of her life and the liaison becomes synonymous with her experience of India. Jungli (hill man) is not the hero's real name, but he is conferred this name to indicate the essence of primitivism and virility in him. He is that child of nature, whose freshness and beauty capture the attention of the author.

> He had a powerful face that instantly compelled me; high forehead, long nose, and skin the colour of almonds; but the eyes suggested a sadness, a past full of grief. On his head he wore a dome of blue turbans. A length of orange fabric was tied around the waist of his aquamarine tunic, and a second piece hung over his shoulder, loose. In front of him lay a sword (IA:1).

This brief introduction to Jungli serves as a prelude to India as well. In an amazing reversal of gaze, Lloyd encapsulates the sensuality of the male body by employing male metaphors.

> Our unspoken attachment deepened. I was moved by his tenderness, his simplicity and beautiful eyes. Beauty is a great robber of my common sense. I tried not to be affected by it; I tried to avoid him. I knew it would be outside the limits of the religion he followed. And I was a traveller. …I was transfixed. I could no longer avert my eyes than the enchanted sailors could cease gazing at the mermaid on the rock" (IA: 4-5).

Somewhere Lloyd could conceptualise herself as an adroit mobile individual with agential power and the vulnerability encapsulated by Jungli attracted her to him. She also tells us about her mental imaginings of India that drew her to travel throughout India. She says that the moment she reaches Jungli's home town in search of him, she realises that her search for the India in her imagination reaches that penultimate stage of fruition:

> Clopping slowly through the rich green countryside to the accompaniment of these ancient and solemn ragas, a honey coloured sun bulging on the horizon, I was infected by a wave of euphoria, subconscious recognition that made up our journey encapsulated all I had imagined about the Indian plains…something stirred the memory that had prompted my euphoria, and at last I understood that it was what made me travel to India. An Image; an incomplete sequence from a documentary film. The

> image of a tall figure in white, walking along a road. A sadhu maybe, a man with unfulfilled eyes. A straight country road in a flat green landscape. Feet disturbing the dust. Music suggesting melancholy; no destination. I had come to India to capture that image (IA: 8-9).

It was for the realisation and the fulfilment of that 'incomplete' picture that Lloyd is drawn towards India. From the vantage position of a privileged traveller, this image of a man, probably sexually unfulfilled, can also be read as the lure of a latent romance in seeking out vulnerability and helplessness. She is attracted towards the pristine quality of inviolate existence as she stumbles on Jungli's 'tender', 'simple' and 'beautiful' eyes and there her 'imaginings' of India and 'reality' combine avidly in the metaphor of female desire. The man she searches and finds becomes synonymous with the country she explores. There is also a hint of a sensual eroticisation nascent in Lloyd's quest.

After Lloyd's first meeting with Jungli, she goes in search of him to his village. When she arrives there, she uncovers the place as the quintessence of India. She feels completely at home in Jungli's village as she finds the freshness of a new life.

> Everything was so perfect, the clear early morning, the smell of damp wheat, the flowers in the verges and the sky flecked with birds: blue birds, green birds, black birds, white birds, bulbuls, hoopoes and so many kinds of birds. And we were happy in this newness, in a simple, unconstrained, uncompromised way we never were to feel again (IA: 14).

This freshness in internalising the novelty of new love and new life is sensually transferred to Lloyd's relationship with Jungli, who by being a *nihang*, was a virgin as well. When she finds a home-away-from-home, simultaneously she finds 'a-man-away-from-home'.

> After a week of being together twenty-four hours a day, the relationship did become physical. It was inevitable. ... His light heartedness was deceptive. When he touched my arm, awkwardly, woodenly, as if I were a goddess and above that sort of thing, I realized that it was the first time in his life. I was thirty one or so, near enough, so was he (IA: 15).

The eroticisation of the land and human body as such had been discussed in the second chapter. In the previous chapter, we have seen human bodies become part of the landscape travelled. But in this case, a specific man is eroticised as an embodiment to draw the similarities between him and the land travelled. Lloyd says:

> It was never a pure accident that I came to live in a Sikh community. ...They were mainly in a community where men lean towards effeminacy, they were proud and dignified, fearless and determined, passionate and warm hearted, adventurous and enterprising, self-reliant and adaptable: every thing I liked and admired and wanted to be. Jungli, to a lesser extent, was all of this, an archetypal Sikh. I came to know him inside out, his character, his moods, his thoughts; he was the soul of my India (IA: 16).

Moreover, he also symbolised that kind of untamed, unsophisticated nature which Lloyd was looking for in her search of India. Hence, she calls him Jungli [hill man]. For her, he internalised an inviolate virility and masculinity which she associates with the ideal land she was looking for. In this instance, we can find that in the close communion of natural surroundings and the man who mirrors nature itself, the lover and the land travelled become one and the same.

Lloyd's stay with Jungli is deemed to be her first-hand experience of Indian life. In Jungli's home she learns to eat, sleep, bathe and work the Indian way. She also braves the extremes of weather and the initial shocks of the ideas of fatalism of the people surrounding her. Though it is looked at rather alarmingly in the beginning, later it becomes an everyday affair for her. Even despite her detachment, she finds herself ballasted USAGE to the monotony and boredom of Indian life as her lover also becomes part of her habit.

> I felt little of the sense of passing of time. Days were the same: the early walks (if it wasn't too hot), the washing of clothes, the morning meal the unbroken eight or nine hours in our room behind the fly curtain and finally the brief relatively cool of the evening. One day could have been interchanged with another: there was no continuity of purpose, no unfolding of events, and in any case events didn't come my way (IA: 33).

She believed that it was the aura of romance that kept the relationship going. The inability to communicate, the mutual and mute understanding between Lloyd and Jungli, according to Lloyd, kept the romance enduring. But there were

certain instances when Sarah finds herself not being able to come to terms with her being an outsider. She could feel the village bristling with xenophobia and almost immediately, Jungli assumes the part of her protector. Initially she is resentful, later she accepts his role.

> I never saw the village shops. It was when Jungli told me what the villagers thought of the foreigners, and why it was, and from what it was, that he wanted to shield me. He protected and looked after me with a devotion I found deeply moving, almost sad in its single-mindedness.
>
> Outsiders, it seemed, were a potential threat to the sanctity of village life…were resented and mistrusted… (IA: 33).

While she senses the intense vibes against her as a foreigner, she also is aware of her disruption of a post colonial space, as she presumes that she would probably be the first white traveller to visit the village since independence. She sees the continuity of the native resistance and resentment towards the White due to their privileged and colonial status.

> Much of the present attitude towards foreigners must have stemmed from the time of the Raj. Westerners were still envied for their wealth, education and freedom, both envied and mistrusted for their power, laxity of morals and lack of faith or adherence to religious ethics. For all the technological advancements and the length of their period in office, village life *per se* had been only superficially affected by the Raj (IA: 34).

Lloyd also finds the societal interferences in her personal matters quite insufferable. She speaks about the gaze of the villagers on her body which is not all indiscreet, interfering, restrictive and controlling. She also feels that her individuality is completely snuffed out by the curiosity which perceives her as a White/female specimen. As the monotony of life sets in at the time of her co-habitation with Jungli, Lloyd finds her 'self' being completely erased due to her cultural alienation. She becomes a slave of her habits and she also finds her being alienated from her 'self', leading her to deny her very 'self' that she was searching for in her quest of India.

Sarah Lloyd's nomadic exile becomes complete as even her own language becomes strange to her. She becomes inarticulate and garbled at this complete erasure of herself. This moment of a disjointed cultural identity makes her identity fragmented and hermetically sealed. In the story, through the ups and downs in her own relationship with Jungli, Lloyd tells us the different stages through which a traveller-woman goes through, by narrating her own experience. She tells us the tale of attachment, involvement, dislocation and then, slow disentanglement.

> One day a man came and spoke English. I hadn't spoken any for sometime and I didn't particularly want to: talking my language again somehow distracted me from my purpose, broke through my disguise and reminded me of who I really was. The man was puzzled by my monosyllabic replies and confused as to why I was there (IA: 42-3).

This phenomenon of her being estranged and later being exhibited as an excellent specimen of a White woman is particularly voiced through out Lloyd's book. Here, she also illustrates the pathos of effacing herself for the sake of love and the ideals of inviolate beauty; discovering the other and getting immersed in it. Her cultural difference from the surroundings and her gendered existence also restrict her physically as the inquisitive gaze of the villagers ploughs into her independent demeanour. Their ethos regarding communal living and the erasure of individuality disturb and confine her independent meanderings. The taboos on sex and man-woman relationships are also described with awe.

> The villagers were extraordinarily ignorant about sex. Young men would be told what to do on their wedding day by their elder brother's wives, who didn't know much either, since… many women viewed sex as no more than their duty to their husbands (IA: 58).

The ignorance and complete subordination to their husbands and the cultural imprisonment of the men in the village, in a way, enunciate the privileged position of the Westerner in comparison to an Easterner. Lloyd could also see this phenomenon reflected in her relationship with Jungli.

> I was gradually becoming aware of the enormous gulf between us. I represented the analytical, doubting educated West, Jungli the innocent, irrational, mystical East. He was possibly unusual for a young Panjabi …in that he showed no interest in England and knew nothing about the life there (IA: 69).

This yawning chasm between their two worlds is illustrated in another piece where Lloyd is perturbed by Jungli's opium addiction. She says:

> Try as I might, I couldn't persuade Jungli to give up opium. He wanted to stop but he couldn't, and if I teased him about it he would tease back. "Your writing is your intoxication', he once said to me. 'Aren't I entitled to mine?' I considered this standpoint and realized that there was truth in what he said. It brought me up short, and I never viewed my writing in the same way again (IA: 67).

This was the kind of uneasy, yet tangible reconciliation of the differences between the East and the West in Lloyd's life story. Yet the reconciliation was only short-lived. Her discovery of Jungli thus becomes her journey in getting involved, losing herself and then regaining her identity in India. At the surface level, it becomes personal to a certain extent; but we can see its symbolic manifestations implied deep below the main story line.

Lloyd also tells us about the various means and ways through which she tried to adapt to strangeness, both physically and mentally. The adaptation to Indian habits, especially regarding physical hygiene, helped her to erase the possible differences between her physical self and that of the others around her. She tells us how she helps to smear dung on to the walls and the way she goes native by accepting the habits on matters of personal hygiene, sanitary habits, etc. She tells us that by getting used to these new habits, she was trying to be one with the strangeness and newness that she experienced all around her. It is not only with

her surroundings that she accommodates herself to, but it was also in relation with her self and her own body that she tried to conjure a completely reinvented equation.

> All this squatting and sitting cross-legged had inspired a new relation between me and my feet. The villagers were obsessive about having clean feet. I would see them lovingly washing them at the pump, removing hard skin and ingrained dirt with pieces of broken brick. I had previously regarded my feet as rather remote objects that I wasn't altogether responsible for, but the necessary adoption of different habits made me almost as fanatical as they were (IA: 86).

For better or worse, Lloyd sees this change in her as a rediscovery of her tangible self, and knowing India through a deep-rooted sensuous relationship meant, knowing that side of the self which was undeniably malleable to new cultural surroundings.

Lloyd understands that it was this search for the 'unknown other' that attracted Jungli to her and *vice versa*. Both of them were trying to explore something that eluded their selves and by working it out, they were trying to capture that quintessential other that eluded them.

> Months after we first met, I asked Jungli why he had been attracted towards me in Calcutta; for him it had been the first sight thing.

> He replied, 'I saw this girl, all alone. No mother; no father; no friend; no relative. She was thousands of miles from her homeland. Yet she wasn't afraid and she looked happy.'
>
> I have heard it that people fall in love not with person, but with a quality they lack but would like to possess. My initial attraction to Jungli had been precisely that: among the things I admired about him. Living by instinct and supreme generosity came high on the list.
>
> ...
>
> What Jungli said was true: I had been happy in Calcutta. It was my happiness that he fell for, the happiness that had eluded him, and might continue to elude him, for the rest of his days (IA: 88).

With both the individuals seeking out what was missing in them, they were searching for the strange otherness that eluded them. In Jungli's generosity as well as Lloyd's freedom, both of them evinced a strange vulnerability which they probably shared. In this sharing Lloyd could salvage and internalize India in a physical sense. She could feel how much India had become part of her when she tells us about her experience of parting from Jungli on a brief vacation to Pakistan:

> Twenty miles across the fields lay Pakistan. It beckoned enticingly and I succumbed. Jungli couldn't accompany me for he had no passport.... I missed him. I missed him partly because I was fond of him and had grown dependent on his protective presence, but partly also because Pakistan

> gave me tough innings. I could find no food; men leered; the streets were hot; the trains were packed; and there was nowhere to sleep. My sole consolation was that Pakistan felt foreign, which India no longer did one bit (IA: 99).

It was through Jungli that Lloyd internalized her experience of India, struggled with the strangeness and unfamiliarity and then accepted India as her own for a brief while. Doing so, she was also trying to fathom the hidden charms in Jungli that had escaped the appreciation of his own family members. Simultaneously, she feels the same about the aesthetic appeal of the Indian landscape which is again probably unnoticed by Indians. Her participation, she feels, makes it obligatory to be the custodian of a kind of connoisseurship which is not found among the native crowd. Moreover, she believes that her position of being a foreigner helps her understand the refinements and the artistry of nature, which generally elude most Indians.

> Few Indians, even plainsmen, were much interested in the scenery on these journeys. They snoozed, smoked, munched, chatted and were sick out of the window; the landscape by and large ignored. In between whiles they must have pondered idly on what it was that foreigners found so absorbing (IA: 104).

At the same time, her understanding of India as well as Jungli was not devoid of any guilt. She explicates these qualms she feels in an episode where she sees a White woman married to an Indian in Leh.

> She was a slim and pretty girl who would have looked nice in almost everything, but dressed like that she looked awful. She must live a life of hell, I thought, in that spiritual and cultural graveyard of a military camp four miles outside Leh.... Could my horror at the sight of this captive girl have been produced by guilt? Guilt that until that moment I didn't know was there; guilt about my lack of commitment, a suspicion that I was only play acting? Or romanticizing? Or was it a genuine sympathy for her plight? ...To commit a Westerner to traditional Indian society for life is like caging a bird. That girl had given her soul away (IA: 102).

This was the moment in which Lloyd realizes the kind of extreme incompatibility in the relationship that was garnered by each other's sympathy and fascination for the strangeness in each other. Eventually, she realizes that mutual disparities are deep-rooted in culture. She tells us that this incident made her see her relationship from a completely different perspective. "I could see in perspective for the first time; could see that my own attitudes and Jungli's were remotely compatible" (IA: 103). She also takes a lone pilgrimage to Hemkund where she gets a chance to ponder on her relationship with Jungli. In the limitless spectacles offered by travelling, Lloyd lists out happiness and freedom that she was actually searching for all her life.

> I joined a pilgrimage to Hemkund. We drove through the Himalayas almost to the Chinese border and climbed the mountain, through primeval forests and meadows of flowers and butterflies, to the icy lake amid bare snowy peaks. It was a time of happiness, of total absorption in the

> immediate present, of mind and body functioning in unison and stretched to their limits.... It was a time of recognition of the freedom and independence I have lost. I scarcely thought of Jungli at all (IA: 108).

Later, Lloyd moves in with Jungli to Utter Pradesh where he was working and there she thought she could continue with her research on Sikh religion and culture in peace. There were occasions when misunderstandings prompted violence from Jungli's part towards Lloyd which further widened the differences between them.

Moreover, Lloyd felt her privacy being infringed upon:

> Not normally an especially gregarious person, the lack of privacy at the dehra turned me positively antisocial. To survive, I withdrew into myself. ...Sometimes people didn't talk about anything but sat together in silence, finding solace in each other's presence. They hated being alone....It was the only social life they knew.
>
> The things I found fascinating - where people came from and what their life had been previously, the machinations of dehra, indigenous ways of doing and making things, the bullock carts crossing the plain and the plant, animal and human life it supported – were never touched upon (IA: 125).

Gradually, Lloyd tells us the story of her getting accustomed to the kind of domesticated life that she loathed and her only escape was through writing. She

elaborates on how the kind of disorganization and tasteless living in *dehra* became so much part of her life that she actually started living it without any complaints.

> Our belongings were hung on nails, wedged into holes in the brickwork, looped over strings and crowded on cracked planks. It was so wonderfully fragile, spontaneous, home-made and temporary looking….The ugliness created its own kind of harmony. A single attractive object would ostracize itself by making me dissatisfied with everything else: if I had anything nice I gave it away (IA: 133).

In the changed circumstances, living with Jungli in *dehra* made Lloyd mute her own tastes, her own self to create a sort of harmony and concord. She tells us about the trials of taming alien ways of domesticity and habits to feel at home there with Jungli. She also comes to know a cross-section of Indian population while living out her life there. For Lloyd, landscape becomes the only escape and pleasant distraction from her bondage with Jungli.

> The plain stretched as far as the eye could see. As visual panorama it was supremely satisfying, majestic in its vastness, unlimiting to the passage of the mind…. The figures and the grazing animals, the thickening sepia sky before a storm and the colours of the landscape changing with the seasons; all these I could watch from the doorway. They were my greatest solace during the time I lived at the dehra (IA: 142).

Lloyd tries to eclipse her physical and mental confines by deriving a subliminal pleasure from the landscape around her. Soon the community life in *dehra*, and the lack of privacy too interfere with her relationship with Jungli. The weather, relatives and neighbours added further foil to the privacy and time she badly needed with Jungli. This need was another hitch in their relationship, as Lloyd was to find out that notions of privacy were different among cultures.

> Privacy is an alien concept to unemanicipated people of the third world, whose conditions of existence deny its possibility. Traditional patterns of living and working are physical and gregarious: the desire for privacy occurs from a need of mental concentration or from the protection from the threat of a less well-off majority. My love of being alone and my preoccupation with writing remained riddles to Jungli to the last (IA: 198).

As she tries to see through the cultural differences logically, on the basis of concepts like privacy, she realises that the traditional Indian ways of life and the moody temperamental swings of Jungli are not to her taste and her comprehension.

> I enjoyed sitting in the horizon, the sunsets that faced us, the sound of the larks, the grazing animals and such wonderful summer storms. I loved being allowed to lead such an uncluttered life...to live among unsophisticated people in a culture so different from my own. I loved India, its wealth of philosophical cities and simple villages. I loved all this.

> But in the end I learnt that the traditional Indian way of life, rigidly defined on a basis of religious ethics and duty, was not for me (IA: 199).

In the same way, she also notices Jungli's changing facades which had also become contradictory and incomprehensible to her.

> The weird goings on at the dehra, the mysteries it guarded and the dramatic ups and downs of my relationship with Jungli, on whom I could never rely to react as I expected and who was alternately loving and gentle, boisterous and provoking, angry and petulant or in quiet depths of despair, were as much as my imagination could cope with (IA: 199).

This kind of an unprecedented irresolution in her life is further complicated by the debased status of women in the society of which she becomes a part. She was happy to belong to India; however she could not appreciate many unsavoury details of life in *dehra*.

> I felt privileged to belong to an Indian community, however unattractive many aspects of life at dehra may have been, because it allowed me to live not just *in* India but *within* it. As a dutiful Indian wife I was quite passable and Jungli was proud of me: neither did I laugh too loudly, nor ran anywhere, nor acted extravagantly in any way. I tried to behave with dignity and restraint. I was - for me - moderately docile. I worked hard (IA: 209).

Fitting herself into the domestic role of an Indian woman, in fact took a toll. Jungli and Lloyd realise that they have to part and invariably they do. It was through India, her liaison with Jungli that Lloyd finds the change wrought out on her by travel. She recalls it to be not very obvious, but subtly transforming:

> I would like to believe that an experience of this kind [of experiencing India] could alter one radically, but in my case I doubt if it did. I would have liked India to change my outlook, myself, instead of subtly influencing my attitudes. It is the writing about it that has changed me, by forcing me to explore my feelings to a depth I would not have done otherwise, and further, by having to express them. Naturally secretive, I have spent my life avoiding exposure to the world.... India taught me to be a woman. I have discovered how much more simple and pleasurable and dignified life became when men and women had separate, and clearly defined roles (IA: 210-11).

India had a bearing on the suppressed emotions of Lloyd. And she could explore her emotions to an extent through her relationship with Jungli. Jungli redefined every single value she believed in: reason, logic, refinement, etc, and his impulsiveness and generosity were something that appealed to Lloyd enormously. But, looking at the 'other' and mentally adjusting to it naturally severed the relationship which hinged on the wild obsession with each other's opposing characteristics. After leaving Jungli, Lloyd realised that:

> I could never go back: I can only ever go on. It seemed to me that Jungli and I were no longer being revitalised by each other. His lack of reasoning power made it hard to communicate. His lack of enthusiasm disturbed me, as did his negative filling of days with sleep. And I was afraid of him (IA: 244).

The same obsession petrified Lloyd and she knew that, if she persists on staying in India as well as with Jungli, she will be an alien to her own home as well as herself. The price she would be paying would have been quite heavy. She would have had to compromise on her own freedom. This is the story of a woman, who finds a home in her lover's village; she accesses it and becomes part of it under his patronising love. But the moment she realises this temporary abode restricting and snuffling her own self, she decides to leave and be free.

Jill Lowe: *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story*

Jill Lowe's *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story* is an autobiographical piece about her stay in India and falling in love with an Indian. For Jill Lowe, travelling was an exercise of self repair. After facing financial bankruptcy, a divorce and struggling to support her children's education, she takes a break in her life by becoming a travel guide and later, a traveller herself. In her autobiographical piece on her sojourn in India, she tells us about her romantic explorations and her *coeur de affaire* with Yadav, an Indian driver. In this book, she tells us about the happy, if not smooth, alliance between two different worlds as well as cultures. Yadav was a driver, widower as well, who becomes her travelling companion during her tour of India. In a descriptive narrative, she tells us about her travels criss-crossing

India and at one point when she glimpses the mightiness of the Himalayas she experiences an orgiastic experience of sensual fulfilment.

> Pinnacles of icing sugar, pink and frosty white, broke the black emptiness and filled the sky. …From behind the faint outline of distant hills, a ball of burning fire pushed, shoved and wobbled its way up into a wakening sky. The ice caps reappeared, stark virgin white, stained with blood red streaks.
>
> Hot tears coursed down my cheeks. My body shuddered. My teeth chattered. A universal orgasm penetrated deep into my soul, and carried it upwards to fuse for a suspended moment with eternity (YRSLS: 34-5).

The witnessing of the Himalayan spectacle becomes a moment akin to the symbolic deflowering of a 'virgin' traveller. This is the moment that metaphorically describes the process of the experience of a place translated in terms of the erotic. In this passage we can see her transfer a purely sensual experience [tactile and sexual] into a transcendental, spiritual one.

It is soon after this erotic and levitating experience that she meets Yadav, who happened to be her driver. When she meets him she is transported to her memories of her association with various other drivers in London. Immediately, she forges a strange relationship with the driver, and this happens with a mental journey into memories of home and comparisons with her personal associations that are already familiar.

> The driver's smile took ten years off his age. It outshone his shiny shirt and ill cut trousers. He was very good looking. As we headed southwest toward Rajastan I studied the back of his head, the black hair carefully combed over a balding patch, and wondered what he was like. If there had been other passengers it would not have mattered, but now we had no escape from each other's company on the long roads ahead.
>
> My mental gear box shifted to Britain, and to the bus drivers I have spent my summers for the last fifteen years. Bobs and Johns, Eds and Bills, Joes and Kevs- I dined with friendly ones night after night….

In this nostalgic *déjà vu*, she slips into the memories of her bitter divorce with her husband. In these photographic memories that ferry her to the past, she reminds herself that she should sever herself from the strange cords that pull her to Yadav.

> Sometimes it's there and sometimes, it's not: a magical inexorable cord that draws two people together. I felt its tug now.
>
> Alarm bells rang in my head. Red lights flashed: *You did not come to India for this. Keep yourself to yourself.* The message knocked and battered at my brain (YRLS: 42).

Despite this conscious resistance, Lowe is drawn to Yadav and they form a close union which goes beyond the relationship between that of a driver and a traveller. Yavad was a widower, had four children and several grandchildren and was

twelve years Lowe's junior. She was a White upper-class woman who had gone bankrupt while Yadav was an Indian from a working class background who could speak only pidgin English. Travel becomes the point in which their two worlds embrace each other and their involvement also starts blossoming with a lyrical intensity. Lowe discovers India through Yadav. Not only does her association spring with her seeking guidance from Yadav as a driver who is familiar with India, as and when she travels with him, she discovers the pleasures of India through the man she loves. She visits India several times before making up her mind to settle here. When she returns to London as a tour guide and not as traveller, the memory of India lingers with a passionate intensity.

> India became my lifeline. At bus stops, in the underground and in hotel lobbies where I waited for my tourists, I lived India vicariously, burying myself in memories, reading books, looking up photographs and even chatting up Indians in buses. I bored my best friends with endless talk of India. I may or may not have been suffering from *mal d' amour* - I still wasn't sure about my feelings for Yadav or his for me - but my *mal-de-I'Inde* was very real (YRLS: 108).

In this trance of living out an alien world in one's own homeland she examines her emotional involvement with India from a distance. She finds India to be a 'transforming' experience for her while all the Western values that she was brought up with were questioned and redefined during her exploration of India.

> My world has been turned upside-down and inside-out. In India I had lived so many lives, had discovered alien emotions and senses that have rocked my foundations. I no longer knew who I was and where I belonged. Conventional values seemed irrelevant. I could not take my country, my religion or anything else very seriously…wrapped in my Indian dream, willingly blinded by its enmeshing web. I imagined I had found freedom. I thought I knew the answers (YRLS: 108).

The spatial displacement she finds herself in is part of the traveller's sublime that we have discussed earlier. Somewhere deep inside, the traveller is stripped of her subjectivity due to her intimate contact and mediation with the 'other'. This happens, as in the case of Lloyd, through the lover who becomes the catalyst that changes the traveller's perception. With Yadav, she travels through the timeless geography of India; she also gets the whiff of the strangling red-tapism, belief in fate and other complications of day-to-day life here. With her prior knowledge as a tour guide and with Yadav's expertise in driving on Indian Roads, Lowe manages to begin a travel agency against many odds. She undergoes the same dilemma over her finances while deciding to stay with him. In between, she flies to London once every six months back to her profession to salvage money to begin her life with Yadav in India. The decision to live with Yadav, despite her love for him, was hard to arrive at

> Should I really marry him? Could I ever fit in with the simple ways of his family and friends? Would I be upsetting him and his way of life? Why was I choosing to live in circumstances which would be uncomfortable and

> frightening to most people with anything like my background? Why was I contemplating marriage with a man who was, at times, uncouth and unkind?
>
> Because I loved Yadav and I wanted to belong to him, not just for a day or month or even a year, but forever, as long as forever might last. I wanted security and propriety, a life in which no one smiled wryly about my living with an Indian taxi driver, or suggested that he was one of 'Mum's afternoon delights' (YRLS: 173).

It was also the burden of severe financial and familial insecurity that makes Jill Lowe try to find an escape in real life through Yadav and her fascination for India. Despite the gruelling experience of her being teased on being older than Yadav, despite her difficulties of having to do with open spaces instead of a proper toilet and being closely examined by Yadav's friends and relatives like an exhibition piece, Lowe takes the ultimate plunge and marries him. Another factor which undermines her relationship with Yadav was his excessive alcoholism. Yet, Lowe's intimacy with India as well as Yadav is an attempt to erase her past and begin her life afresh. Eventually, she calls their relationship a 'quirk of fate':

> By some quirk of fate, Yadav and I found our mirror images. Husband and wife, lover and loved, father and mother, brother and sister, friend and foe - we were interchangeable components of the same machine. As such, we

> loved and hated, enjoyed and despaired, laughed and cried, parted and like mercury, fused again in a single streak of quick silver (YRLS: 273).

Their bond was the strange one that attracted and repelled: a complete communion of opposites. In that bond, the opposites of the East and the West and of disparate classes and cultures blend, with a strange harmony. *Yadav: A Roadside Love Story* is the tale of the love and togetherness of two people from different backgrounds. In the epilogue to the story, Lowe tells us about her transition and adaptation to completely different way of life in India, as Yadav's wife.

> You might call my life on the farm escapism. I am sure that, in part, it is an escape - an escape from the ever-present need to explain myself, my situation and my lack of enough time or wherewithal for normal emotions and the niceties of life. But most of all, it is an escape from loneliness, the aching loneliness of unshared problems, the loneliness of unsatisfactory relationships, the loneliness of not quite belonging anywhere (YRLS: 278).

For Lloyd, though she finds a meaningful relationship with Jungli, as soon as she found the chinks within that, she finds the necessity to be independent and on her own again. For Lowe, in her relationship with Yadav, she was trying to overcome her loneliness by finding a companion. Their disparate ways of thought and living are ultimately bridged and cemented by marriage.

For both these women, their lovers became the standpoint from which their understanding of the country becomes complete. Despite companionship and

protection offered by these men, they also served as vehicles to penetrate and establish their contacts with the country they travelled. These men became mediators who help gain easy access to alien communities. By 'belonging' to their respective lovers, both Lloyd and Lowe could investigate those spaces of village community life, which would have been otherwise denied to them. This apart, we can see the problems of gender affecting their relationship. Cases of physical abuse and disparity in male-female relationship are also well-brought out by the writers. But by the virtue of being White travellers they still remain privileged because they are not robbed off their agential power and status in either of these relationships. And when they write about this relationship, it is the reflection of their agency that is being translated out there.

Imogen Lycett Green: *Grandmother's Footsteps*

The first two books explore the theme of the autobiographical narrations of two women who experience India through the men they love. *Grandmother's Footsteps* by Imogen Lycett Green is another book on India, where the 28-year-old granddaughter of Penelope Betjeman, traces the foot steps of her grandmother, who passed away in the hills of Khanag, Himachal Pradesh. Green retraces the steps of her traveller grandmother, trying to delve into the heart of India, which her grandmother so much loved.

In the 'Introduction', she tells us that by writing the book, she is completing the vocation of her grandmother who lived a 'varied and interesting life' in India though she did not leave behind a travelogue or a memoir. Green tells us how

bereft and inconsolable she was after the death of her grandmother in India, because just the previous year of her death, Penelope had initiated her to the wonders of India.

> I felt bereft. I had travelled around India with my grandmother the previous year, when she was pushing seventy-five and I was just eighteen. We had set off in January a little wary of each other's close company, yet we returned in April partners to the core - in sickness and health, for better or worse, in laughter and tears. She had taught me not only the Devanagri script, all the manifestations of Vishnu, the sculptural incarnations of all the Hindu deities, all about Indian architecture, religion and society, but also how to deal with my lot. I had been floundering on the far side of a sulky adolescence and she pulled me together (GF: xii).

After the death of her grandmother Penelope Betjeman, Green visits India to relive her memories and take a walk down her memory lane by retracing her steps in India.

> I decided to go to India. I thought if I retraced our joint expedition I would capture her once again; I thought I might be able to absorb her from the places she loved. Also it seemed to me that I should let other people know about her too. Her brave and indomitable spirit was worthy of more than being forgotten on a mountain. I wanted to write about her so that other people could be inspired by her as I had been… (GF: xii).

This book, *Grandmother's Footsteps* is an attempt to resurrect the spirit of travel with the help of Penelope Betjeman's memoirs and the tracks she left behind on the land she travelled. This can also be seen as an attempt of the traveller/writer who dovetails into the colonial past to salvage the memories of an ideal past. In the introduction to a brief biography of Penelope Betjeman, Green tells us about Penelope's shipment to India as a precocious, demure eighteen-year-old and later her slow adaptation to and enchantment with India. Here, she also mingles Penelope's personal history with that of the political history of India. She says that Penelope's father Philip Chetwode, rose from his position as a soldier, due to his heroics and became the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army. She also tells us about Chetwode's initiative in the Indianisation of the army.

> Yet the coming of Indian independence from British rule meant that changes had to be made in the system; a nationwide force of Indian officers needed to be trained up to lead their own men, and it was with this aim in mind that the Field Marshal founded the Indian Military Academy in Dehra Dun in 1932. His successful officer training establishment, the equivalent of the officer academy at Sandhurst, still takes in cadets today (GF: 11-2).

Here, Green reconstructs the Raj and her great-grandfather's contribution to India through a series of memories, remembrances, historical and political anecdotes, etc. Here, despite laying out her connections with the Raj, there is an underhand rhetoric about the organization and systematisation of Indian institutions by the British. It was at this time that Penelope came to India as a

demure teenager. Green also tells us the highbrow life led by Penelope Betjeman in London and her initial disinterest in India. In Penelope's own words quoted by Green:

> 'I went to India as an incurable highbrow,' she said. 'I never was really social; I loathed coming out in London. At dinners I always used to get subalterns. Subalterns' conversation was frightfully dull, because I only liked people talking about Giotto, and none of them have ever heard of Giotto' (GF: 9).

Moreover, Penelope's acquaintance with India from a distance was also coloured by the images of sterility and drabness that had been handed over to her by sources that she had been acquainted with previously. After two years in India, young Penelope literally falls in love with India. She rides from Kulu to Simla valley with her mother and literally unravels the beauty of India which mesmerises her for the rest of her life. As a child, Green says that she knew nothing about her grandmother's life except that she was the wife of a famous poet, John Betjeman and that Penelope disappeared to India every year on fairly long trips. But eventually, she grew up with the tales of India. Green also tells us that it was Penelope's intention to take her grandchildren on an 'educational tour' to India.

> I did want to go, but I was nervous of travelling alone with my grandmother. I thought it was fairly uncool to travel around India with a seventy five year old, when all my friends were joining up together to go

> 'travelling'. Secondly, I was still sulky, podgy and perhaps, slothful, and I was terrified that I would disappoint her and that we would not get on together at all.... I was eighteen, at the same age as she had been when she first arrived in India in 1928 (GF: 29).

That was Green's first introduction to India at an impressionable age and she says that this education in travelling had an 'MA's worth of learning' (GF: 30). But she says that it was a relief to get back to England, for the lasting impression of the dual-experience, of India as well as her grandmother, had been quite overpowering, yet positive.

> After that, what you might call the slow sinking-in of the experience took place - the dual experience of India and my grandmother. About a month after we got back, I began to feel completely recharged, changed even. I retook an A Level, passed my driving test and became possessed with energy (GF: 30).

Her acquaintance with India through her grandmother, in fact, opened up the repository of the immense energies which were within herself. This was not only physical, emotionally too Green found herself relating with her grandmother more than she had ever done in her life. But unfortunately, Penelope died in the foothills of Himalayas the following year, and Green was distraught at the sudden and unexpected demise of Penelope. To revive and relive her grandmother's memories and spirit of adventure, Green sets off to India.

> I thought about her more and more, and I decided that I had not had enough of India - thinking that India had to be where to look, because I did not seem to be able to get hold of her in England - and I was back to India to get some more (GF: 31).

With this intention of salvaging her grandmother's memories from the land she travelled and liked so much, Green flies to India.

And when she lands in India, it is the whiff of India that welcomes her:

> The fetid Indian smell - a mixture of coriander, sweat and excrement - envelops every traveller as he descends on to the tarmac runway, like a warm blanket, tangible and suffocating. After a week or so the smell seems to evaporate but that is merely the moment when one has got used to it, for actually it is ubiquitous and never fades. (GF: 33).

Another never-fading-smell that she stores in her nasal memory, according to her, is the early morning ritual of eighty million Hindus.

> ...just when the eighty million Hindus of India are 'cleansing' themselves by squeezing waste from their bowels on to the peripheral areas - railway tracks and derelict houses and river banks and beaches (GF: 34).

With this generalisation of the Hindu scatological details [reminiscent of Murphy], Green leaves for the hills of Kulu and Manali right away. She halts at places in Kulu where her grandmother used to stay before and she meets people with whom Penelope was closely associated during her stay there. When she sees

the present day Kulu, Green reminds the readers that Kulu and Manali were not always like the present day one.

> Buses sit at the bus station and backfire and apple lorries tear down the mountain roads now, but it wasn't always like this. For at the end of the nineteenth century, when Manali grew from a traders' encampment into a couple of shops and a post office, it was already earning its reputation as an unspoilt holiday retreat. In 1910 a Public Works department rest-house was built for British officers on tour who wished to take advantage of the opportunity to hunt for fish; for red and black bear were once common there, and ibex, *burrhel*, *thar* and *ghoral* as well as leopards and the Kulu streams were stocked with trout (GF: 42).

The author tries to etch postcard like the picture perfect past beauty of Kulu and Manali and juxtaposes the etchings with the present day Manali, with its crowds, traffic and garbage grounds. As in the case of other writers, Green is also critical 'modernity' disrupting the pristine peace of Indian landscapes.

Green's first meeting is with John Banon, a dark olive-skinned middle- aged man with Irish origins, who was a friend of Penelope. He tells Green about his friendship with Penelope and her dreams about writing a book on the temples of Kulu and Manali. It was Penelope's plan to write a book on India, about her sojourn in the Hills of Kulu and Manali. She wanted it to be a "now and then book, comparing life in the Raj with modern India" (GF: 44). But she could not

fulfil her wish during her lifetime. All that she left behind was remnants of memoirs and documents of her unfinished research on India.

While following her grandmother's footsteps on the hills, which naturally acquaint Greene with Hinduism, elicit interesting responses from the author regarding the religion. She also meets fellow Westerners and establishes her contacts with them. She also observes on the hippie influx to India and their fascination with Hinduism thus:

> It is not so much the domestic complications of the Hindu pantheon which attracts Westerners seeking solace and escape from their material world, however, as the eternal spiritualism that is inherent in Indian culture. There is a regular population in Manali of Westerners who have adopted what they see as an Eastern way of life....yet most of the mellow ideal of a simple life led close to nature has palled for most, for dreams of heavenly flower-power and peaceful salvation are often brought down to earth by drugs (GF: 48).

Many travelling women meet their Western counterparts in India and their commentary on the Westerners is a point that is worth analysis. Through the memoirs of Penelope, Green reinforces her disappointment with the fellow Westerners who fall for the exotic lure of India. According to her, most of them do not even care to find out the 'real' India, as the 'real' escapes their comprehension. Greene agrees with her grandmother's observation years later in

her trip to Kulu and Manali. She sees fellow Europeans trying to go through the experience of India.

> There were stoned Westerners in tie-dye clothing with pallid and spotty faces and glazed eyes. A French girl may have hair dyes with peroxide, but her countenance is colourless. In all the myriad faces and shapes and colours of the mixed Manali population, hopeless Westerners, hooked on drugs and debilitated by an inadequate diet stand out, ridiculous and sad (GF: 49).

The embarrassing spectacle of witnessing fellow countrymen trying to gauge the experience of India in a psychedelic fashion is narrated in a contemptuous manner by Green too. Here, we can see her echoing her grandmother's embarrassing sentiments on her fellow travellers, who do not share her inquisitiveness and curiosity about the art and culture of India. Green quotes Penelope: "'They dress in dotty clothes with Hindu mantras printed on them but none of them can read the Devanagari script,' she despaired" (GF: 51).

For Penelope and Green, 'real' India was deeply embedded in its tradition, its architectural glories and those archival treasures that the British had either preserved or confiscated over the years. For them the image of India corresponded to two major notions. One was that of a culture that was deeply engrained in Sanskritic tradition. This, in fact, is in tune with the orientalistic tendencies of the belief in the possibility of the East having had an opulent past. The other is that of the modern civilization ushered in by the British. India, in

essence, either fits into that tradition which is based on the opposing axles of a rich but dead culture [based in ancient cities which were repositories of Sanskritic civilisation] or of an inviolate natural beauty [which resides in rural India]. For both Penelope and Green, the quintessence of India existed in natural spectacles or the cultural artefacts of the past. Artefacts were part and parcel of the Indian 'high brow' tradition that the British wished to document. They were also found in the edifices and monuments created and left behind by the British.

While searching for Penelope's footsteps through Indian heartlands, Green meets an assortment of people who were very closely associated with her grandmother, in order to appropriate remnants of the life she experienced in India. These were extremely painful moments, especially when she could not get enough of Penelope from the narratives of acquaintances like Raj Krishan Gaur and his father Pandit Balak Ram.

> The atmosphere in the room was suffocating now, as Krishan Gaur moved into the more general sphere of the way of Kulu, which led quickly into the way of India and into the way of the world and I did not seem to be able to get him to be more specific about Penelope. His polemic continued, and I tried to think of getting us outside. He was wise but I was claustrophobic.... The imposing Raj Krishan Gaur slipped back inside the brown and cream house and walked down the drive alone, reeling from the two-hour ordeal and revelling in the mountain air (GF: 58).

Along with salvaging bits and pieces of her grandmother's memories from people's narratives, Green also tries to immortalise the memories by erecting a memorial for Penelope.

> But I was not walking only to retrace her steps, for along that route lies Khanag, a tiny Pahari village sitting high on the other side of Jalori Pass, looking away from Kulu and over towards the next great valley, the Sutlej. And at Khanag my grandmother had died. My task was somehow to carry a memorial stone there and set it in cement (GF: 72).

She sets out on this mission with the memorial stone and two helpers to the hills of Khanag. On the way to Khanag, she relaxes in a rest-house in a place called Shoja, where her grandmother used to stay during her trip to Khanag. She felt cold and fearful:

> I read a passage in my grandmother's book *Kulu* which describes her preparations for bed on the night she spent there at Shoja rest-house in 1964 ... I went to bed in my thermal underwear, three shirts, pyjama trousers and slipper socks. I draped my Kulu shawl over my mountain sleeping bag, but still I fared little better than she had. There was deathly quiet about the Victorian rest-house, but it was not a companionable kind of silence (GF: 92).

This re-living of every experience felt by Penelope is the major characteristic of the book. This travelling in grandmother's footsteps is not altogether devoid of the traveller's apprehensions too. Through the maps and guidance provided by

Penelope's memoirs, Greens travels the unknown, which she had only heard and read about. This mystery of experience is definitely canopied by fear and doubts of the unknown. Simultaneously, the traveller/writer is also swept by the sublimated feelings of encountering the spectacular. She says

> When my grandmother first entered the Kulu valley on horse back in 1931 with her mother, she must have come by the lake. She would have seen that we now saw, and she would, most probably, have been overcome by the magnitude of the mountains, as we were overcome (GF: 95).

As Green lays down the foundation stone of Penelope's memorial, she is awakened to the fact that her grandmother owed her experience of God to India. She quotes from Penelope's memoirs where she speaks about the aspect of enlightenment she experiences in India.

> 'I know I owe my first real experience of the Reality of God to India,' was another Random Thought. 'India made me God conscious,' she continued. 'The two countries where the air is electric with God are India and Spain'. Her Christian beliefs were always inextricably entwined with the pantheistic spirituality to be found in India (GF: 101).

In India, Penelope found a 'spiritual walking' stick on which she could lean on. In India, Penelope's desire to mingle the spiritual and aesthetic found expression, and in Green's sojourn in this country she could experience the same as she internalised the beauty of the hills and searched for the Godly knowledge in abodes of spirituality. "And only in India are there different paths to choose from.

In India the air is electric with God" (GF: 118). Along with the quest for spirituality, Green reaffirms from the narratives of Penelope's acquaintances that one of the reasons that compelled Penelope to travel was her personal crisis in life. Besides that, the spirit and adventure and her quest to explore something new and exciting also served as catalysts to her traveller's itch.

> Asha's confirmation of suspicions that were already developing in my own mind made confrontation of my grandmother's emotional life much clearer and easier. My grandmother had not come to India in 1963 wholly from an unsatisfactory marriage - for it was never simply that - but her individualism and her joy in independence had led her back to India and helped drive her spirit to fill her life to the brim with other attachments - to temple architecture, to the mountains, to her horses, her articles, to her lectures and her photography.
>
> If she had never married, I know she would have roamed the world on various quests - for knowledge, for ways of life, for religion too - but without a love in her life and without a family she may never have been happy at all (GF: 128).

Green's discovery of Penelope materialises in her close contact with India. In India, she finds out how Penelope tried to negotiate with her different selves: the urge for independence and the need to belong; the urge to explore new horizons and the desire for domesticity.

In her quest to find out Penelope's friends in India and rediscovering her through them, Green nostalgically recollects her own expedition to India with her grandmother. Her own journey is peppered with many reminiscences of her joint-tour of India with her grandmother. In Green's autobiographical sojourn, Penelope's life also becomes deeply embedded. She understands her grandmother better through her tour of India. India becomes the terrain where two women's lives meet and mediate, through their pasts and presents. Exploring India becomes a deeply emotional experience for Green. And here she finds her life linked to the adventures of her grandmother as well as the past entwined with the present. She travels throughout India through the memories her grandmother had left behind. Her present understanding is shaped by the narratives of the past. At times we find her being disappointed with the present circumstances infringing upon her ideal concept of the past. But eventually, she achieves an epiphanic denouement where India transforms her personality.

In all the three texts we can see autobiographical reminiscences of women who explore their personal relationships through their sojourn in an alien space. They familiarise and internalise those spaces as and when they explore the relationships. These relationships need not necessarily have a fairy tale ending, but they have a transforming impact on the persona of the traveller.

These relationships are important to the travelling women because, they have better access to the land travelled through their relationships. They are better informed because their relationships enhance their power of gaining access to the 'other'. Through these relationships they are also better informed of the land

travelled because they experience a range of emotional ups and downs to comprehend their journey in space. These journeys in the 'alien' spaces thus become journeys to their selves. Through writing about these journeys, the identification and the merger of the 'outside' and 'inside' spaces become more apparent. By translating and representing the other 'spaces' through subjective 'cognitive' selves they merge both the seemingly disparate realms within the boundaries of writing. Writing is the realm where the representor [the author] and the represented [the country] unite and the writings represent, however, imperfectly, oneself. The relationships, here, become catalysts in the way the author understands herself and the country travelled.

In the concluding chapter which follows this, I shall be listing other features that are present in women's travel writing as areas which could be taken up for future research. I shall also be rounding up the major issues discussed in all the chapters in this dissertation and the conclusions that I have arrived at.

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Chapter V

Conclusion

I

It is time to sum up. I approached the area of travel writing by women with a great deal of apprehensions. Initially, I was introduced to writings on travel by men. While I was searching for a topic for research, it was my husband and fellow research scholar, Parasuraman, who suggested that I take up a study of Graham Greene's travel writings. As I went through Greene's *Journey without Maps* and *Lawless Roads*, I could find in them a gold mine for postcolonial research. In these books he wrote about his expeditions in Africa and elsewhere. However, I was more curious about writings on India, and started to read travel writers ranging from Alberuni, Batuta, etc, from the medieval times to the present. I was interested in contemporary writers like Alexander Frater, William Dalrymple and Michael Wood. I developed a strange affinity to this realm, for it appealed to me personally quite as much. Reading on cultural encounters were also pathways of self-interrogation. It was then that I started thinking about the possibility of women travel writers, and by sheer co-incidence, I came across writings on travel by women.

I began my readings on women travel writers like Dervla Murphy and Imogen Lycett Green. In the beginning, I found them tedious and somewhat outrageous in their comprehension and narration of India. At the same time, in many ways I could identify with many experiential commentaries on the pleasures of travelling. These opposing feelings: identification, fringed with a mild annoyance [at the biases and polarities of judgemental observations] made me plunge headlong into the realm of travel writings by women.

In the beginning, my readings were influenced by post colonial theories. I drew on theories of the colony and the confrontation with the 'other' from post colonial theorists on travel writing like Greenblatt, Stafford, etc. But then, these theories did not necessarily include the female dimension . Marie Louis Pratt and Sara Mills came to my help as pointers in excavating a separate theory on women travellers. Again, I faced a serious dilemma of extracting and using theories on colonial travel writings by women on contemporary texts.

What I could make out then was that contemporary writings on travel are much more theoretically informed than that of the colonial ones. As I browsed through the social history of England, I could see that there was a large scale political interest in the revival of the colonial memory [by way of setting up of the Commonwealth, etc.]. There was an embedded embarrassment mixed with apology in the harrowing remains of that memory. These mixed feelings of patronage and apology, could not betray the nostalgia ingrained in them. With this social background, I could see that it would be facile and simplistic on my part to render a post-colonial reading alone to the texts I wanted to work on.

It was here that the need to theorise women's travel writings in a postcolonial context presented itself. The very fact that contemporary British women do not travel as part of the colonial machinery is worth noting. By stating this, one cannot assume the complete autonomy of a female Western traveller in her choice of travel as such. On the one hand, we can assume that, in case of autonomy over their profession and economy they have a more privileged status than that of women of the third world countries. The near-absence of women

travel writers from the third world or Afro-Americans and other minority communities explains this. On the other hand, we can also see the lack of complete freedom in choices as compared to male traveller/writers. For example, in *On a Shoestring to Coorg*, Dervla Murphy thinks twice before setting out to India. As she embarks on her journey, we can see her ruminating on her immobility for five longs years due to domesticity, motherhood, etc. Same is the case with Jill Lowe, whose bitter divorce, stormy personal life and other financial burdens chained her to England for a long time. In this dissertation, I have drawn from theories on visual arts, historiography and theories on gender to lay bare the problems intricately connected with travel texts, which are mostly read as male artefacts or as colonial writings.

The "Introduction" of the dissertation presents the rationale for choosing the topic. It was my interest to look at the various nuances of contemporary narratives on travel by women. Travel writing has drawn immense critical attention during recent times and women's participation in this genre has also been the focus of a tremendous upsurge of interest. It was the popularity of women's studies that brought centrality to women's travel writing, but unfortunately work on women travellers are read as mostly adventure tales. Indeed, travelling has had its emancipatory function. At the same time writings on travel contain the same machinations of power and control that exist in male texts. Ignoring the ways in which constructions of the 'other' occurs in travel writings by women amounts to a perfunctory glossing over these texts.

Here, I have looked at the realms of travelling women, their writings about the land travelled and moreover, the way the act of travelling, experiencing different geographical and cultural terrains, etc, are expressed in the form of writing. Basically, my study is on the various ways in which the 'real' and 'imaginary' image of India is constructed in the writings of contemporary British women travellers. The title "Making of an Anecdotal India" is used to encapsulate the traveller/writer's attempts at constructing the 'image' of India through literary anecdotes, commentaries, reminiscences and reports of the 'other' culture, space and time. By writing about the 'other', one can also see the construction of the self identity which materializes in these books.

In the second chapter, 'From a Visual Odyssey to Paysage Interieur', I have looked at the ways in which 'landscapes' are constructed in select travel writings by women. I have formulated a term called Place Fixation as an important phenomenon, which narrates the instances of the author 'zeroing in' on a particular locale for her 'experience' of India. Through "bodyscaping", "city and country scaping", which form part of landscaping as well, I have tried to bring about the author's process of finding a 'home-far-away-from- home'. This ultimate search of home within disparate spaces is another unique phenomenon in the writings of women travellers. However, I have not tried to compare this idea with any male texts because such comparisons, I thought, would result in an overwhelming unwieldiness. But, by looking at the patterns of 'landscaping' in women's travel writing, I have tried to bring about certain specific issues pertaining to 'female gaze.' I have suggested that studies which theorize male

gaze and its agential power cannot possibly explain the dimensions of the female gaze. I have suggested that, as one draws from major theories, departures should also be made so as to fit in the different discourses. I have also analysed some photographs that are illustrative of the 'construction' of the third world women viewed as homogenous category to the Western target readership.

In the third chapter, 'Boulevard of (Broken) Dreams: Her Versions of (His)tory', I have tried to look at two kinds of approaches taken by women while trying to narrate the history of places. On the one hand, Gillian Tindall takes a detached, 'objective' view of history in her book *City of Gold*. On the other, Georgina Harding approaches history through a subjective, autobiographical narrative in *Tranquebar*. While these women try to narrate time, we can find remnants of nostalgia embedded in both the versions of history. They try to tell us about a colonial past with a great deal of colonial nostalgia ingrained in them. For them, historiography becomes a nostalgic exercise in exploring the past. But, as they historicize, they also bring into focus the details from the forgotten memoirs, diaries and other unpublished documents of women travellers who have experienced the place before. The rhetoric of the time lag that has occurred in places like Bombay and Tranquebar, the places which they try to historicize, are also narrated in a detailed manner in their books. I also try to look at the way the women historians I deal with, assume documented history as the 'real' history as they trace the history of both Bombay and Tranquebar from the colonial times. For them history began with the colonialism.

Sarah Lloyd's *An Indian Attachment*, Jill Lowe's *Yadav* and Imogen Lycett Green's *Grandmother's Footsteps* tell us about the authors' personal relationships in India and how they tried to understand the country while negotiating these. In the fourth chapter, 'Of Grandmothers and Lovers', I examine how the author perceives her relationships that she involves herself with, eventually taking the shape of the epitome of India. Moreover, by introspection, they understand the dimensions of their inner self in a better manner through their personal lives. Knowing the 'other' person through difficult relationships also brings into the picture the phenomenon of complications in a cross-cultural encounter. Here too, I have examined the way the understanding of a country is coloured by the personal interactions of the traveller. In this chapter, I have looked at texts as examples of autobiographical writings of travelling women who entwine their lives with that of the spaces that they travel. They write about their comprehension of India through their personal relationships in their lives. They tell us about an India understood from their private experiences as lovers, wives and granddaughters.

In the dissertation as a whole, I have examined how the alien Other is comprehended through one's understanding of spaces, time, and relationships with the members of that community. By experiencing the 'other' spaces, time and personal relationships, the travelling women systematically try to internalize and understand the phenomenon of a cultural strangeness they encounter. In their writings on travel, they try to imagine and conjure up an image of the 'alien' space they have travelled through these first-hand experiences. In fact, the India

that the women travel, experience and write about, more or less, mirrors their understanding from their own subject positions and their psychic peregrinations.

Hotch Potch: Some Patterns In Travel Writing

After looking at the way intimate personal relations contribute in the understanding of a nation, I shall be laying bare certain patterns which configure in travel writings. I am including this in the concluding chapter as an after word due to the fact that these patterns recur in women's travel writings on India and could be taken up as a separate area of research altogether in future. This chapter shall be dealing with some common tropes, clichés and metaphors in travel writing. In looking at the general, technical, literary aspects and common patterns of travel writing, these phenomena try to conjure up a land away from home to the Western target readers.

I do not wish to concentrate on certain chosen texts as I have in the previous chapters, instead I propose to include all the texts of my study in the discussion. I wish to postulate certain questions with the hope that research on these elements shall be taken up in future. I shall be looking only at certain interesting features that have captured my attention. Serious study on these elements shall hopefully be taken up in the future.

An interesting feature that persists throughout the books I am working on is the prevalence of chromatic patterns and metaphors used in the narratives. The most obvious chromatic patterns can be seen in the description of the landscape that is envisioned by the traveller. The narration of the visual feast does not indicate the

proprietorship of the traveller, but her eagerness to part with the visual sensations that she has experienced and participated through narration. This is also an instance of re-visioning and reliving the country travelled, through memory. Here the author assumes the role of the sole participant, benefactor and advocate of a certain cause expounding the beauty of a landscape, people or place that have been presumably unfathomed till now. Here, the traveller woman is not merely a narrator of far-away tales; she simultaneously discovers something that has not been explored as yet and testifies to it, probably to a target reader. It is worthwhile to look at an interesting piece by Sarah Lloyd, who tells us about the amazing landscape that unfurled beneath her feet thus attesting to the celebration of her visual experience.

> Everything was that hot-green of late summer: checker-board prairies of near-ripe rice, lime-green, gold green and bronze green, fodder crops in mid-growth and exuberant weeds in damp burrow pits. Here and there, I detected a coarse crochet of a plot newly ploughed: in one, a square of damp chocolate, a flock of cranes was feeding… (IA: 109).

Here, the traveller describes the sensation of witnessing a particular landscape through an array of colourful images which indicate the sensual pleasures that landscape offers her. We can also see in this passage that perceiving the geographical bounties of the country travelled is a dramatic emotional experience for the traveller. It is a highly exciting experience which is translated into sensory images, where the visual, the auditory, the tactile, the olfactory and the gustatory senses merge to provide a sense of emotional fulfilment to the traveller.

Another striking feature which we find in this study is the dramatic way in which the traveller's 'arrivals' and 'departures' are orchestrated. This can be seen as a literary device that brings in the 'dramatic effect' of instigating the reader's interest. Besides this, these can be seen as excellent examples which help project the traveller's responses in confronting, familiarising and eventually, departing from the 'other' cultural spaces. For example in Jill Lowe's *Yadav*, the first impressions on coming to India are expressed through a lot of chromatic descriptions which at once evoke all the senses. The visual, auditory and the tactile senses are evoked in a manner that stirs the consciousness of 'othernesses'. The first dalliance or the first taste of another country rouses a negative sublime which enhances fear, disgust and repulsion. Lowe reacts to India thus:

> Pushed, shoved and jostled, our noses assaulted by a mixture of aerosol room freshener, attar of roses, sweat cigarette smoke, we emerged into the damp heat of mid-afternoon Madras.
>
> Some thing touched my leg. A small boy stood beside me. He pointed to his mouth, rubbed his stomach and whined…
>
> I could not stop looking. Through the tinted windows of the Ambassador, intriguing sights unfolded. I suddenly wished my eyes were bigger, my brain better able to absorb the sights, smells and sounds that overwhelmed my senses. …Women in bright saris, like a swarm of frightened butterflies, scattered before our honking horn. Bullocks pulling mammoth loads, their blue-and-scarlet-painted horns held low strained against wooden yokes.

> Cows ruminated, chewed their cuds and munched on indigestible card board boxes (YRSLS: 17).

This is the first reaction towards the questions of subjectivity and identity formations in travel writing. After experiencing this sensual fiesta, Lowe says that she gave herself to India. This evocation of the senses can be seen in Murphy's *On a Shoestring to Coorg* where arrival in India is titled 'Initiation in Bombay.' The tenor of a sexual initiation is purported here. This induction is also loaded with the emotional baggage of excitement, fear and anxiety. This theatrical narration and the orchestration of mixture of feelings can be found *ad nauseum* in any travel narrative.

After confronting the alien landscape, the act of familiarizing begins and stretches over the exploration of the place. Understanding of the place begins with collecting and systematizing of the data comprehended from the space. For example, reading up on the place, exploring its archives, painstakingly documenting the historical, geographical and other details and trying to theorise the present through the past, etc, are part of understanding the space. The control over the space originates with the utterance of the collected data and the interchanging of it. Writing about the place of travel marks the ultimate step of control. Thus the traveller imprints her thoughts and her body on the land she travels in the form of writing.

Acts of familiarisation

As we have discussed earlier, after the first exposure to India, the act of familiarisation occurs through witnessing and understanding the immense propensities of the country travelled. It is during this process that the problems of gendered travel are faced by the traveller. This is one phenomenon that I could see consistently in all the texts that I looked at. What is narrated below is just one curious example of the physical transgressions faced by women travellers.

In Indian Attachment, Lloyd speaks about her experiences as a woman traveller and the travails of it, in order to escape from the native gaze and the transgressing touch of the natives.

> Two men approached. I was a quarter of a mile from the village and there was - most unusually - no one in sight. Almost as if they had paid them not to be.... they didn't go away. Instead they dragged me to a tractor and trailer, I hadn't previously noticed, parked a little way down the road, from which about fifty school boys were gazing open-mouthed, at the spectacle...
>
> One of the draggers interceded. 'She's staying with a Nihang.' From the way he said it, it seemed to make a difference; it was what I had been afraid of.... I shouted at the well-dressed man, 'These men are drunk, and they dragged me here by force!'

> He turned to them. 'She says you are drunk.' Then he addressed himself to me. 'No no,' he said placidly, 'they meant no harm. All they want is some sexual enjoyment.' He seemed to take for granted it could be had for the asking (IA: 36).

Most of the women travellers narrate the risk of being molested, hauled or being raped in a foreign land. A travelling White woman acquires a commodity status and accrues public interest due to the physical freedom she has. She is generally deemed to be loose, immoral and vulnerable. The transgressions against their bodies and the violence they are at risk are also instances of the male fear of the female wanderer. Somewhere, when a woman breaks free from the traditionally assigned spaces of their domestic interiors, they are considered to be infringing upon the male territories of the 'outside' space. Lloyd tells us about the conspicuous presence of the female White bodies that becomes an easy "target to the convoys of bottom pinchers" (IA: 37).

In the case of Dervla Murphy and Georgina Harding who came to India with their children, we can sense the instinctive fears and anxieties centred on the child. The sense of menace, the natural jeopardy and the symbolic fears engorge the mother's mind. In *On a Shoestring to Coorg*, Murphy transfers her own strange and eerie fears to her daughter. This fear transforms itself as an unnerving concern on Murphy's mind when Rachel ventures out on her own lonely exploits with other Indians. "On the way home I asked Rachel what games they had been playing: 'Oh', she said unconcernedly, 'We threw a coconut into the well and fished it up again'; which reply I found not a little unnerving , as many wells are

over eighty feet deep (OASC: 142).” The sense of caution and protectiveness which prevail in the mother’s anxiety is a point worth examining.

A travel narrative is incomplete without the author’s cruise through the customaries or procedures of witnessing births, marriages and deaths. These witnessing and narration of the cultural details are part of an ethnographic profiling. Performance of rituals is presented as a visual and auditory spectacle. For example it is interesting to see Murphy’s reaction on seeing a wedding:

> Here were hundreds of glossy raven heads and golden - skinned arms and faces, and shimmering gown and fluttering veils and gleaming , glowing gold and silver ornaments studded with rubies, emeralds or diamonds... I was mesmerised by the ever-changing pattern of saris and jewels, blending and contrasting, as little groups strolled up and down the hall, or stood animatedly chatting (OASC: 242).

In many instances, as it is presented here, we can see exaggeration used as a literary device in travel writing. Sometimes it is interesting to see a pithy anecdotal commentary that summarises the whole of India for a target reader. Conversions with Indians trite and abrupt anecdotes, ended without comments, speak volumes about India and Indians. Harding’s *Tranquebar* consists such a brief anecdote that illustrates the gross difference of priorities between a Westerner and an Indian. In an interesting episode, she tells us that whatever appealed to her aesthetics aroused an Indian’s primitive instincts.

> The shade was green with the reflection of the water, the garden distractingly close. A hoopoe landed with open crest on the edge of the roof. A golden oriole darted like sunlight against the tank. Thawb Ali said the oriole was 'a very eatable bird' and I saw a catapult lay to hand on the balustrade (TASSI: 43).

Besides this, we can also see features of caricaturing and stereotyping that happens to 'other' bodies which complement the narrative of the 'other'. Murphy comes up with a lot of clichéd phrases while observing Indian mannerisms and behavioural patterns. I have listed them out in this chapter because again it makes an interesting reading from an ethnographical point of view. These mannerisms are individual ones which are in turn translated as cultural stereotypes.

(1) the doggedly helpful Indian male (OASC:9)

(2) Unashamedly money minded (OASC:9)

(3) Complete self assurance even when one is wrong (OASC:9)

(4) Ultra dogmatic (OASC:10)

(5) Stupid and obstinate (OASC:10)

(6) Not chivalrous (not willing to share a 'White woman's burden') (OASC:9)

(7) Uninhibitedly joking, abusing, arguing, gossiping, chiding, haggling (OASC:19)

(8) Scores of Indian men, talking, eating, praying and copulating (OASC:29)

(9) Hypersensitivity to criticism. (OASC:223)

(10) Oriental calm, debauchery, chaos, turbulence, sentimentality, etc (OASC: 199)

(11) Indian racism and the astounding accounts of it (OASC:251)

Thus, in so many words the differences in Indian behavioural patterns are brought out by Murphy, but it is noteworthy that, as and when such details are highlighted, it is mostly done in a negative light. At a psychological level it is contrasted with Western mannerisms. These are but a few examples of the patterns of travel writing by women and the literary devices that are used are mentioned in a perfunctory manner. But these features in themselves do make a very interesting area of study altogether.

Another curious phenomenon I have come across in my research during the time I was searching for the biographies of authors was the anonymity of the writers. Details of Georgina Harding and Sarah Lloyd could not be traced at all and not much has been written about their works either. Though the details of all the books were available on the Internet, most of the ones on travelling and anthologies on travel writing too have not been assigned a space for them. This explained to me the plight of women travel writers as 'one-book-wonders'. Dervla Murphy was the only exception of being an established writer. Even in the Internet, I could hardly find any reviews and comments on the other travel books that I have studied. Most of the books elicited minimum responses from the readers. Whereas, in stark contrast, most of the better-known male travel writers were quite popular and found themselves distinctive spaces in the critical

discourses on travel writing. This issue raises a crucial question of the market for women's travel writing.

How far women's travel writings are accepted and circulated in the market and how far the role of women in travel writing had de-gendered the genre or redefined the genre have to be analysed and studied extensively. Another question is the simplistic compartmentalisation of women travellers as travel/writer/female. This very category is quite restrictive and reductive of their roles as writers. The questions on the genre of travel writing still remains as a gendered realm, and the further marginalisation of women writers within that genre are other queries which call for serious critical scrutiny.

'Making of an Anecdotal India: A Study in the Writings of British Women Travellers in Independent India' is thus an attempt to understand the 'land' from the point of view of British women travel writers. It is hoped that this study will form a significant aspect of the West's encounter with India in the post-colonial context.

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