

Editorial

Travel is a journey on purpose. It is naturally associated with the spirit of adventure and a philosophical quest for knowledge with which mankind has engaged itself as meaning-making creatures since time immemorial. Though Travel literature and its motifs could not receive due attention of critics in the past, it has occupied prime importance in the post colonial discourse. Travel writings of archetypal significance such as Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and even Travelogues of the historians, which were earlier read as 'innocent' readings of the symbolic or allegorical or physical journeys of an individual or the whole mankind in search of adventure and knowledge have been revisited with Post-modernist insights and have opened up new vistas of travel, travel writers and travel literature. It has redefined the identity and motifs of travel writing in terms of displacement, location / position, stereotyping, Othering, negation and negotiation, ambivalence, and politics of representation.

Different papers selected for this issue offer new insights mostly drawn from Post colonial critics, they compel us to understand that a travel writer and his travel writing is consciously or unconsciously conditioned by not what he physically sees but by what his location/position compels him to see, the meaning of being a V S Naipaul lies in his 'Location' (Bhupen); the physical journey of land and sea which is set to acquire knowledge in outside world by a Thoreau, is but a quest for mystic raptures, for the wholeness of being (Naikar); the identity of author has transient status, imagination and nostalgia often make an outsider Vassanji, an Insider (Siddhartha); a travel writer in Ghosh and Seth with hybridized existence, craves to be a negotiator who negotiates in between spaces and cultures with a cosmopolitan vision (Raj Gaurav); there are number of travel writers like Elizabeth Gilbert whose writings can be appreciated just as voyages of self-discoveries (Kusum); a Travel writing can be most dependable source of history as in the case of Francis Bernier's travel writings of 17th century Mughal India (Anant); travel writing exposes inner quest, self realization and self actualization –the elements which surpass the generic confines and can best be illustrated from poetry too, in the case of Arun Kolatkar's poems (Pulkita); a travel writer like Naipaul also experiences the highs and lows of his attitudes and preferences in his three books on India (Ritu). In this way, the present issue opens up new windows to understand and appreciate travel literature.

I wish to thank all the contributors and the Review Editors who have helped bring out this special volume by sparing their valuable time and energy. Dedicating this issue to V. S. Naipaul, we pay him glowing tributes, he will be remembered not only for his acerbic criticism of Indians and India but also for his life long bonding with India.

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