

## TRAVEL WRITING AS A LITERARY GENRE

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### **Abstract:**

Nature writing, adventure writing, exploration writing, guidebooks, and other topics are all covered in the literary genre known as travel writing. A fundamental human desire has always been to travel. Men have travelled for a variety of reasons, including curiosity, adventure, personal and professional errands, diplomatic missions, spiritual fulfilment through pilgrimage, business and trade, and, more recently, as part of multi-cultural immigration and emigration for employment. Travel writing is the result of some curious and methodical travellers documenting their views, encounters, and historical facts as they appeared to them in a colourful picture of the globe.

**Keywords:** Travel Writing, Travelogue, Literary Genre, Culture, Discovery, Exploration.

### **Introduction:**

The word 'Travel' came from 'Travailen' meaning 'to make a journey'. Basically, it meant 'to toil, labour'. Travel writing aspires to communicate information about lately ferret out lands or those little familiar to the reader; it can be the history of the imaginary journey depicted as genuine one but crucial mainly in terms of ethical and literary content, as in adventure stories, utopias, and philosophical works. Travel writing is about visiting one place to another and being on different place one

comes across different culture, traditions, geographical area, different situations etc.

"Travel literature is travel writing of a non-fiction type. Travel writing typically records the experience of travelers in some interesting places and circumstances. It will include vivid descriptions, illustrations, historical background, and possibly maps and diagrams. (Rao.Web)

### **Travel Writing As A Literary Genre:**

The term "travel literature" refers to

a broader category than "literature of discovery and expansion," and it can be described as any type of writing, whether or not it has travel as one of its primary purposes, whether it is fiction or nonfiction. <sup>1</sup> Hence, within the body of literature produced by travel, travel is not always a topic or even a structuring factor. For instance, the Portuguese and Spanish writers of the historical accounts of their overseas conquests in the sixteenth century, as well as the authors of the cosmographical descriptions of the time, used information gathered by European travellers but did not necessarily dwell on a description of their own personal experiences and observations. The important thing to note is that the author, who could have easily been an armchair writer, ultimately relied on the information and authority of first-hand travellers.

Because different types of literature defined by various objectives and conventions have travel as their primary condition of production, travel literature is best described as a "genre of genres". Literary genre refers to a set of presumptions and frequently unspoken constraints that influence how language representation is formally organised to satisfy social context requirements. Therefore, it is a concept that is just as applicable to how any document is treated as a historical source as it is to the specialised interpretation work done by literary critics. As though playing a linguistic game, the cultural historian must recreate the underlying presumptions and norms of any cultural

creation, establishing the context in which, to use an example, a proposition makes meaning within a text or a work makes sense within a broader body of literature. The propositional substance of writings like travel accounts might be deceptive if one is not aware of genre standards.

The concept of travel has served as a literary technique since its inception, serving as both a literal representation of a human experience of movement in space as well as a rhetorical device with a life of its own in the world of cultural discourses. Early myths and epic poetry from a wide range of civilizations heavily emphasised travelling gods and heroes; significant themes like initiation, learning, and exile, in which human values are established in the face of the world and the unknown, were expressed through the metaphor of travel. As evidenced by the representations of Gilgamesh, Moses, and Odysseus, this is undoubtedly the case in Middle Eastern and Greek cultures. These early paradigmatic travellers obviously did not all express the same particular meanings, nor is it true that each figure always served as a model for the same particular theme, given that travel literature encompasses many genres whose significance relates to a variety of cultural contexts (a striking example is the Homeric Odysseus, who was on the one hand the conventional figure for the acquisition of worldly wisdom, on the other - in Ne's hands The metaphorical potential of the idea of travel and the image of the traveller) were extensively explored in classical literature. Travel developed a

rhetorical framework that was useful for both religious and epic narratives, giving rise to the fundamental elements of the ancient novel. It also proved to be very effective for satire. Writers in the fields of history and ethnology like Herodotus, Strabo, and Tacitus among the Greeks and Tacitus among the Romans compiled or wrote incredibly thorough and methodical descriptions that ultimately relied on the concept of accurate travel accounts.

As a result, the traveler may transcend a particular identity in order to either defend it against difference, reject it as false, or redefine it in light of a deeper comprehension. Travel offers powerful and perilous opportunities from the perspective of those in positions of authority within a culture. This issue sparked a persistent debate about the educational value of travel as it developed as a cultural practice in European tradition. The awareness of the significance of travel for moral identities had already produced a discourse of advice or condemnation in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. There was never a single response to the theme, and it is clear that a variety of context-dependent debates determined whether the author would emphasize the virtues of the pilgrim or condemn the relaxation of foreign customs. In antiquity, it was common to accuse the traveler of lying. Odysseus and Apollonius of Tyana, for example, represent the positive paradigms of the acquisition of worldly wisdom and religious wisdom. These paradigms could be combined, but they could also

be in opposition to one another. The dichotomy's moral urgency only increased when Christianity, a religion of salvation, won the day. The late-Antiquity emergence of pilgrimage as a dominant paradigm was facilitated by the otherworldliness and attachment to a sacred geography of Christian theology. In general, medieval religious writers disregarded curiosity, even though they advocated for merchants, knights, and clerics to travel in the proper manner, thereby promoting the possibility of honest trade, virtuous chivalry, and spiritual missions. In the late Middle Ages, as an empirical and naturalistic paradigm gained legitimacy, the discussion of the value of travel shifted from clerical to lay concerns. Therefore, the humanistic figure of the gentleman as traveler, which became an important educational model in the late Renaissance, found a ready response to Erasmus' condemnation of the corruption of religious pilgrimage. However, the triumph of the curious traveler, or the scientific traveler, as defined by Francis Bacon in *New Atlantis*, was obviously not the end of the story: fierce criticisms, such as Jonathan Swift's pointedly anti-Baconian island of Laputa in the eighteenth century, still borrowed satirical techniques from Lucian against modern targets' claims to authority.

### **Conclusion:**

Thus, travel writing is now regarded as a distinct literary genre with roots in the 17th century but thriving in modern times as a devoted interest. It provides a first-hand account of all the locations the authors

have visited. Travel and the reports from travellers have, in fact, inspired a lot of individuals for all time. This is because the readers' minds are mapped with a mental construct that makes them want to travel and write their own memoirs, which leads to the ongoing development of the travel writing genre.

We need to be sensitive to cultural differences when it comes to travel writing. The desire to comprehend cultural studies is the driving force behind the upsurge of interest in trip writing. There is rhetorical analysis or discourse analysis. Because it is entirely about a traveler's experience in relation to his interactions with nature, it is a non-fiction work of art. A traveller learns more about distinct languages, faiths, cultures, and traditions. The difficulties that a person encounters while travelling, on the other hand, include a sense of alienation from their country of origin since they are separated from their own community and a sense of otherness in a foreign setting. All of these are skillfully portrayed in the "melange" of travel writing, which artistically illustrates the close connection between people and the locations they travel to and emerges as one of the most fascinating literary genres.

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