

**(RE)PRODUCTION OF LANDSCAPES:  
A STUDY OF SELECT TRAVELOGUES FROM  
MAJOR BANGLA JUVENILE PERIODICALS,  
1883–1915**

THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF  
THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (ARTS)  
AT JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

SUPERVISOR  
DR. SUTANUKA GHOSH

**SARBAJAYA BHATTACHARYA**

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY  
KOLKATA 700032

2023

**Certified that the Thesis entitled**

“(Re)Production of Landscapes: A Study of Select Travelogues from Major

Bangla Juvenile Periodicals, 1883–1915”

submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts in Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the Supervision of Dr. Sutanuka Ghosh, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Jadavpur University and that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

-----  
Dr. Sutanuka Ghosh  
Countersigned by the Supervisor  
Dated:

-----  
Sarbjaya Bhattacharya  
Candidate  
Dated:

## **Acknowledgement**

Between the time the work for this thesis officially began and the time it made its way to a final draft, it is safe to say, without sounding hyperbolic, that the world changed. With the unprecedented nature of the cause of this transformation – sudden and overwhelming – came also the new and often arduous task of figuring out how to navigate the world all over again. This experience – humbling, frustrating, frightening – taught me to reconsider my kinship with the world and those around me, and perhaps remind myself of everything for which I had to be thankful and the many things for which I should be angry.

In the midst of this chaos – personal and public, and this anger – personal and political, it would not have been possible for me to work on this thesis without the patience, kindness, and support of my supervisor Dr. Sutanuka Ghosh. She has always been encouraging and helpful and conversations with her always left me with a feeling that an optimist would describe as confidence. I thank her, most of all, for tolerating my missed deadlines, my erratic workflow, and for understanding why I avoid taking phone calls.

I would also like to thank Professor Rajyeshwar Sinha, who was a member of my Research Advisory Committee, for all his help and his unshakeable belief that I would, indeed, be able to finish this work. He always took an active interest in my research and offered valuable advice. Our RAC meetings were always enriching and engaging.

In the years after my M.Phil, I had the opportunity to work as a Research Assistant for Professor Jayati Gupta during her tenure as a Tagore Fellow at the National Library, Kolkata. It was here, amongst the musty smell of the Rare Books section and desolate corridors of the first floor reading room, and the many conversations with Jayati di that I found my interest in travel writing. I thank her for giving me this opportunity and for her encouragements over the years.

I would like to thank my professors – Professor Supriya Chaudhuri, who tried once, in her inimitable style, right before a presentation I had to make at a conference, to take me along to a lecture by Professor David Curley because she remembered, even though she had no reason to, that I was working on travel literature; Paromita di, for always asking after my work wherever I met her; Rafat da, for conversations about Romantic landscapes. I would also like to thank Professor Abhijit Gupta, Dr. Nilanjana Deb, Professor Santanu Biswas, Dr. Nandini Saha, and Professor Rimi. B. Chatterjee, and Professor Sonia Sahoo for their help, support, encouragement, and signatures at various points over the course of my time in the department. I would also especially like to thank Professor Satyabati Giri for patiently answering my many queries.

I thank our librarians and office staff – Bishwanath da and Samita di and Issai da and Papri di – for all their help. Jadavpur would not have been what it is without – Nepal da, Buro da, Milan da, Boudi, Sujit da, Ratan da, Joydeb da – who fed us and supplied many cups of tea during the many hours of work and more hours of procrastination than any of us would care to admit.

One of the most comforting aspects of working on this thesis was the time (harshly cut short by the pandemic) I got to spend in libraries and archives. The National Library, with its frightening pigeons, watery coffee, and the terrace where I spent countless afternoons provided a safe and mostly silent haven for my thoughts to find coherence. The staff at the Reading Room of Bhasha Bhavan were always ready to help and deal with my constant woes regarding “brittle” books. I have to thank the librarians at Bangiya Sahitya Parishat and the Sadharan Brahma Samaj library for always answering my many, many queries. The digitisation work done by CSSS, Heidelberg University, and the British Library proved to be invaluable to my work. This thesis acknowledges the help and hard work of those who helped me navigate these spaces. I would also like to acknowledge the work done by Dr. Gargi Gangopadhyay – her thesis and her work with the Indian Foundation for the Arts helped me immensely. I want to thank Dr. Rajarshi Ghosh for pointing out to me, even before I had started writing my thesis, that Nabakumar in Bakim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s *Kapalkundala* was possibly the first tourist in Bangla prose fiction.

Writing this thesis would have been impossible without the kindness of strangers on the internet and in the real world. When in dire need of a reference or a book, this is where I, like many others, found a solution. This thesis acknowledges the crusaders of the free internet without whom most of us would be lost.

Working on a thesis is a mostly lonely enterprise which seems like it will never end. Even on a good day, it is an uphill climb for many and I would not have been able to reach the summit without professional help. This thesis could not have been completed without it.

The only place I would ever thank and acknowledge my friends and family would have to be away from their eyes and ears. The solitary journey of writing a thesis was made tolerable, and even better, by the presence of Shehnaz, Sulagna, and Jitamanyu. With them, I could share my academic agonies unfiltered. Aldish – hater of dolphins and consumer of lavender coffee – was a constant source of memes, jokes, and reels. Various residents of Jheel Road, at various points, allowed me to take over their rooms for work and much-needed banter. Sujaan and APal’s bookshelf came in handy multiple times for which I need to thank them.

Sinjini – friend, comrade, and flat-mate – was my companion in building a new, albeit, temporary residence, where a part of this thesis was written. Jashodhara lent a helping hand to this thesis in many ways, often voluntarily, without being asked, as is the way with friends. Anwasha, travel companion and editor extraordinaire, was a silent pillar of strength and support. She copy-edited this thesis and helped greatly in compiling and editing the bibliography. Diptanil da has been a patient listener over the years that I have known and shared my woes with him. I need to thank Jijo for simply being there. His presence and friendship, whether he agrees or not, continue to make life bearable.

In writing this thesis, I was often accompanied by Puchu and Dampuli, feline friends in Kolkata and Bombay respectively, whose infectious lethargy I had to battle while I worked. But their companionship, transcending the barrier of language, gave me comfort, while their antics, most importantly, made me laugh.

My brothers and sisters were, as usual, always there when I needed them for matters academic or otherwise. Anjali di, a source of comfort, was often at the receiving end

of my many unjust demands. She also, I suspect grudgingly, surrendered to the idea of a messy desk and even messier bookshelf. Transcending my mood swings of which she often bore the brunt, my mother took an active interest and supported my work. Her labour, often unfairly unacknowledged by me, was a source of sustenance. Without the support they built around me, I could not have finished this.

I do not know how to write about or thank my father. In his trademark way, he would have expressed surprise to learn that I had finally finished writing this thesis. He introduced me to the world of literature and he was my first storyteller.

But of the many things I have learnt from him, the most important lesson has perhaps been not to take life and myself too seriously. And certainly, humour, in many forms and from many sources, has been the most important element that sustained me over the last five years.

I know for a fact that my father would have been the happiest to see this work completed. This thesis is (and was always going to be) dedicated to him.

## **Table of Contents**

<i>Acknowledgment</i>	i
<i>List of Images</i>	vi
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The Child, Childhood, and Children's Literature in Colonial Bengal</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Chapter 2: The Culture(s) of Travel in Bengal</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Historical Landscape</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Natural Landscape</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>222</b>
<b>Appendix I: List of Periodicals (1818–1915) and Where to Find Them</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>Appendix II: List of Bangla Juvenile Periodicals: <i>Mouchak</i> to <i>Shuktara</i></b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Appendix III: List of Periodicals with Muslim Editors (From <i>Digdarshan</i> to <i>Shuktara</i>)</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Appendix IV: Travelogues within India Published in <i>Sakha</i>, <i>Sathi</i>, <i>Sakha o Sathi</i>, <i>Balak</i>, <i>Mukul</i>, and <i>Sandesh</i></b>	<b>261</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>266</b>

## List of Images

### Frontmatter

“An Awkward Visitor at an Up-Country Railway Station in India.” Wood Engraving. *The Graphic* 18 June, 1892. H. Johnson, Wikimedia Commons.

### Chapter 2: The Culture(s) of Travel in Bengal

*Figure 2.1* Cigarette Card of the Imperial Tobacco Company. Source: ASAP, <https://www.asapconnect.in/post/55/singlestories/collecting-the-world>. Artist unknown.

*Figure 2.2* Sikh Woodcut c.1870. From Ian J. Kerr and John Hurd, editors. *India's Railway History: A Research Handbook*. Leiden, Brill, 2012. p. 128.

*Figure 2.3* The Opening of the East Indian Railways. *Illustrated London News* April 14, 1855. Source: <https://er.indianrailways.gov.in/cris//uploads/files/1549352915573Inaugural%20journey%20howrah%20to%20raneeGUNGE.pdf>.

*Figure 2.4* “Railway Travelling in India”, From Louis Rousselet. *India and Its Native Princes: Travels in Central India and the Presidencies of Bombay and Bengal*. London, Bickers and Son, 1882. New Edition. p. 588.

*Figure 2.5* *Directions for a Railway Traveller* by Akshay Kumar Dutt. Early Indian Printed Books Collection, BL. Frontmatter. <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/directions-for-a-railway-traveller>

*Figure 2.6* “Nanabidho Jaan” *Jyotirigan*, vol. II, June 1871, p. 137.

*Figure 2.7* Railway Station and Train. *Jyotirigan*, vol 2, January 1871, p.83.

*Figure 2.8* “Railgari.” *Shishu* year 2, issue 7, Kartik 1320 BS, p. 317.

*Figure 2.9* A train approaching the signpost. *Sakha*, part I, issue 4, April 1883, p.57.

*Figure 2.10* Edmund Mitchell. *Thacker's Guidebook to Darjeeling and Its Neighbourhood*. Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1891. Frontmatter.

*Figure 2.11* *A Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London, John Murray/ Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1901. Frontmatter.

*Figure 2.12* Advertisement of hotels from *Newman's Guide to Darjeeling*. Calcutta, Newman and Co., 1900.

*Figure 2.13* Advertisement of guidebooks from *Newman's Guide to Darjeeling*. Calcutta, Newman and Co., 1900.

*Figure 2.14* and *Figure 2.15* Pages from *Bhashpiya Kol o Bharatbarshiya Railway* by Kalidas Maitra. Serampore, 1262 BS.

*Figure 2.16* *Octerlony Hoite Qutub Porjyonto* by Umesh Chandra Nag. Calcutta, 1892. Frontmatter.

### **Chapter 3: Historical Landscape**

*Figure 3.1* The River. "Kashmir" by Abala Basu. *Mukul*, part I, issue 6 & 7, Agrahayan and Poush, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Abala Basur Bhraman Katha*. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2015, p.35. Artist unknown.

*Figure 3.2* Kashi. *Sakha*, part 8, issue 3, March 1890, p.37. Artist unknown.

*Figure 3.3* Kashi. *Mukul*, vol. 7, issue 10, Poush and Magh 1308 BS, p.147. Artist unknown.

*Figure 3.4* Padmini's Palace. "Chittore" by Abala Basu. *Mukul*, part II, issue 1, Baishakh, 1303 BS. Reprint in *Abala Basur Bhraman Katha*. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2015, p.57. Artist unknown.

*Figure 3.5* A View of Lucknow. From "Lucknow" by Abala Basu. *Mukul* part I, issue 9, Poush–Falgun, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Abala Basur Bhraman Katha*. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2015, p.43. Artist Unknown.

*Figure 3.6* The Sea. From "Madras" by *Mukul*, part I, issue 10, Chaitra, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Abala Basur Bhraman Katha*. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2015, p.49. Artist Unknown.

*Figure 3.7* A View of Delhi. From "Delhi" by Jaladhar Sen. *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. 1, part I, issue 12, Chaitra, 1301 BS, Reprint. *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. I, 1301 BS. Edited by

Ashoke Kumar Mitra and Subimal Misra. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2015, p.207. Artist Unknown.

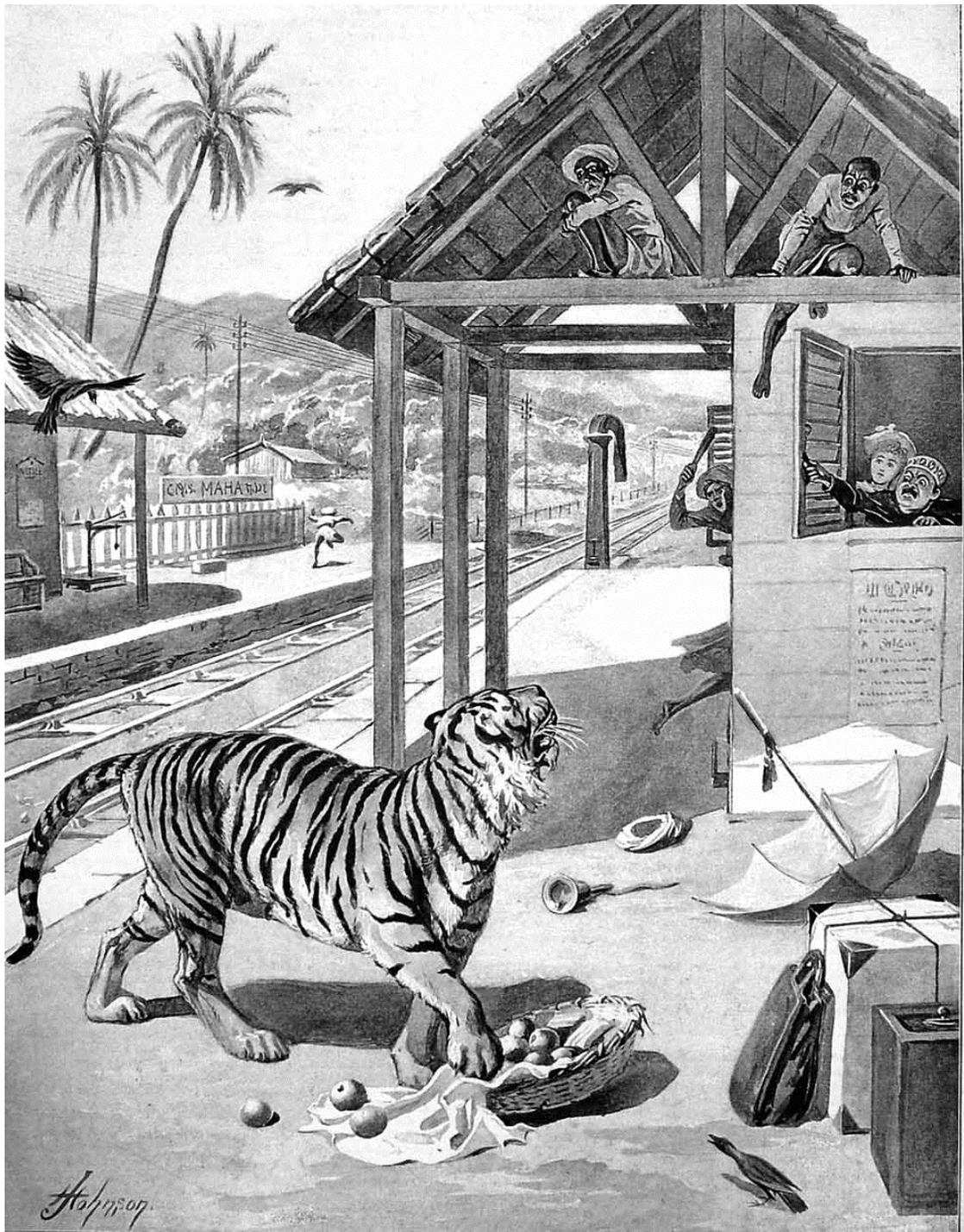
#### **Chapter 4: Natural Landscape**

*Figure 4.1* From “Dosh Diner Chhuti by Rabindranath Tagore. *Balak* year 1, part I, issue 3, Ashar 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey’s Publishing, 1417 BS, p.108. Artist: Harishchandra Halder.

*Figure 4.2* Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay. “Darjeeling”. *Balak* year 1, part I, issue 1, Baishakh 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey’s Publishing, 1417 BS, p. 9. Artist: Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay.

*Figure 4.3* A Land of Clouds. From “Megher Muluk” by Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri. *Sandesh* year 2, issue 6, Asharh 1321 BS. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 2018, p.73.

*Figure 4.4* Climbing a Mountain. From *Sakha*, part 11, issue 3, March 1893, p.46. Artist Unknown.



*“Away; Away my steed and I,  
Upon the pinions of the wind.  
All human dwelling left behind;  
We speed like meteors though the sky.  
When with its crackling sound the night  
Is checker’d with the northern light.  
Town, village, none were on our track  
But a wild plain of far extent.”*

## Introduction

*“The tourist is a traveller who passes through the landscape as an outsider and sees only its surface.”*

(Mitchell 2002b, 264).

*Sandesh* was possibly the first Bangla juvenile periodical I became familiar with during my childhood. This was not, however, the *Sandesh* of the nineties, my growing up years, but the *Sandesh* of the sixties, edited by Satyajit Ray and the Bengali poet Subhash Mukhopadhyay. They came to me as inheritance—faded and yellowing at the edges—their pages well-worn from decades of readings and re-readings by my brothers and sisters. These issues of *Sandesh* were different from the glossier and more colourful fare that came to us in the form of the puja barshiki – the autumnal special published during the Durga Puja.<sup>1</sup> My particular affinity for these old issues of *Sandesh*, and later, a big hardbound edition of *Sera Sandesh [The Best of Sandesh]* was also a result of my familiarity with their editor and his predecessors. Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, Sukhalata Rao, Sukumar Ray, and Punyalata Chakrabarti formed a significant part of my readings in the years that I also discovered *Sandesh* – both at home and at school.

My experiences of leisure reading were not exceptional, keeping in mind the privileges within which I grew up. A study of the reading habits of children in middle and upper-middle class families who had the means and intent to fill their children’s shelves with books would reveal a similar pattern – a conclusion, albeit tentative, drawn from years of conversations with friends and peers. We read, for instance, *Tuntunir Boi* and *Abol Tabol* and *Chhotto Chhotto Golpo*; we read Upendrakishore’s wonderfully quirky abridged versions of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* where he managed to combine the colloquial with the grandiose to hilarious effect; we read *Ha*

*Ja Ba Ra La* and *Lakhsaner Shaktishel* and *Golpo aar Golpo* – not entirely aware of the fact that the texts and their authors belonged to the last decades of the nineteenth and the first few decades of the twentieth century.

It may be argued that the habit continues, at least to a certain extent, well into the twenty-first century. This argument is corroborated, for instance, by the number of reprints of the aforementioned texts that continue well into the present day.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in recent times, there has been a spate of reprints of older Bangla juvenile periodicals, including *Sandesh*. The others include *Sakha*, *Sakha o Sathi*, *Mukul*, and *Balak*.<sup>3</sup> The choice of periodicals is not a mere coincidence. These periodicals were important landmarks in the history of the development of Bangla children's literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In their own ways, they signify and represent the changes taking place in the domain of Bangla juvenile literature which, in this period, was taking a turn from education to entertainment and simultaneously producing a leisure reading space in middle and upwardly mobile classes of Bengali Hindu/Brahmo upper-caste society.<sup>4</sup> In this thesis, I have chosen to focus primarily on these periodicals – for the importance they had in their own time as well as the longevity they have displayed in terms of subsequent reprints.

I am tempted to argue that the choice of the subject of my thesis was my own way of combining education with entertainment – to bring the experience of my childhood reading habits into the adulthood of academia. This decision was largely impacted by a project I had been fortunate to be a part of.

Between 2017 and 2019, I worked as a part-time research assistant for Professor Jayati Gupta who was carrying out the work of her Tagore Fellowship at the National Library of India. Her extensive research on early Bangla travel writing and the travel writing of Bengali women in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in particular formed the basis of my academic interest in the field. It is in working with her that I noticed a gap in the existing research on Bangla travel writing – the gap had to do with travel writing for children. This thesis is an attempt to address some of this gap.

## Research Question

A part of the title of this thesis is '(Re)Production of Landscapes'. The placement of the prefix within parenthesis alludes, first, to the fact that the form of landscape in art is already a reproduction of the physical landscape. As Mitchell (2002) argues, landscape art is a representation as well as that which is represented. In this thesis, I have sought, also, to focus on the element of 'land' in landscape. Land here refers both to the physical land as well as the land as nation – the Mother Land. This thesis has tried to understand the ways in which processes of production and reproduction with their gendered connotations are related to the processes of the formation of national identity and selfhood. This is done, as the title notes, through a study of select travelogues published in Bangla juvenile periodicals between 1883 and 1915. The rationale for selecting this particular timeframe is elucidated further ahead.

Travel writing *about* Bengal does not always, of course, refer to travel writing *in* Bangla. Academic research on travel writing about Bengal largely deals with two bodies of literature in terms of language – Bangla and English, the latter mostly the works of British men and occasionally women who had lived and/or travelled in and around India. If we consider travelogues written in Bangla, the body of work may be divided into two categories based on spaces of the journey – India and Abroad. In the first category, further divisions may be made, based, for instance, on the purpose of travel – a pilgrimage or a holiday, for instance. In a larger sense, these can be classified as religious and secular travel.

This thesis studies specifically travelogues written about places within India and as such, has surveyed existing scholarly work that deals with this category in particular. We will return to this point at a later stage.

As mentioned, this thesis takes as its timeframe the years between 1883 and 1915. Edited by Pramadacharan Sen, the juvenile periodical *Sakha* was first published in 1883, two years before the foundation of the Indian National Congress. The specific mention of the foundation of a political organisation in this context is important and requires elucidation. In focusing on travelogues published in Bangla juvenile periodicals in the given timeframe, this thesis would also like to place these texts and their publication within the larger context of colonialism and the emergence

and development of nationalism. The idea of nationalism, as it develops in Bengal in particular, was fuelled, among other things, by two significant events – the coming of the printing press and the establishment of the railways. In this sense, travel and writing and publishing about travel is intrinsically linked to the discourse of nationalism. This thesis intends to understand how the nation was ‘imagined’ for the child in the pages of these juvenile periodicals through the travelogues written about places within India. 1915 has been chosen as the concluding year for two reasons. First, it encompasses the first two years of *Sandesh* when it was edited by Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri. *Sandesh* marks a significant turning point in the history of Bangla juvenile periodicals. This was the first periodical to be published by a company [U. Ray and Sons] and not by an individual or a religious institution (the Brahma Samaj, for instance). Upendrakishore had dedicated much of his literary career to children’s literature – writing, publishing, and illustrating books for children. Feeling the need for better pictures and drawings in children’s books and disappointed with the existing infrastructure, Upendrakishore set up a printing press himself, the well-known history of which requires no re-telling here.<sup>5</sup> Second, 1914 marks a watershed moment in the history of not just Bengal in particular or India in general, but the world itself. The beginning of the First World War, of which India became a part by extension and default due to its identity as a British colony, did not merely signify a beginning, but also an ending of what and Eric Hobsbawm (1996) has described as the long nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The shift and irreversible change of European powers that the First World War brought about also had significant implications for their colonies and nationalism and nationalist movements. It is not the aim or idea of this thesis to use history as bookends. Rather, these travelogues will be read within the processes of historical development(s) as they take place in Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### **Research Methodology**

To use the word ‘history’ is to be aware of its many connotations and most significantly, the many omissions and exclusions its writing has performed across ages. For centuries, the glories of the hunt have been written by the hunters, often

violently obliterating the possibilities of the existence of the voice of lions. This thesis acknowledges that in including some, it has had to omit many others.

First, the periodicals. The appendices at the end of the thesis, compiled from various sources, show the number of juvenile periodicals that had been published in Bengal during this period. It has not been possible to include every single one of them in the following pages. I have noted the basis of the selection of certain periodicals.

Second, it is important to note that these periodicals were mainly published by Hindu/Brahmo, middle and upper-middle class, upper caste men—the bhadraloks, and, in the rare instance of *Balak*—a bhadramahila. By extension, in delving into the readership of these periodicals, this research has concentrated primarily on analysing a Hindu/Brahmo childhood. The real existence of other childhoods, often not inscribed in print, remain absent from this thesis. I would like to point out here that my research has not succeeded in uncovering juvenile periodicals from this period published by Muslim men or women, although there are travelogues by them, about travels both secular and religious, from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The periodical *Nabanoor*, for instance, first published in 1903 and edited by Syed Emdad Ali, had published travelogues, including one by Motiur Rahman, about his travels to northern parts of India including Delhi and Kurukhestra.<sup>7</sup> There are earlier travelogues as well, most famously that of Dean Mohamet, the man credited with introducing shampoo [head massage/vapour bath] to Europeans and opening the first Indian restaurant in England – The Hindoostan Coffee House. Dean Mohamet immigrated to Ireland in 1784. In 1794, he published a travelogue entitled *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* which dealt mostly with his travels in India and concluded with his voyage to foreign shores.<sup>8</sup> Another early traveller to Europe from Bengal was I'tisam-ud-din.<sup>9</sup> There were books about the Haj, but many of these books were informative rather than descriptive and were not based on actual travels.<sup>10</sup> None of these travelogues, published either as a book or in periodicals, were meant specifically for a young audience.

Third, the periodicals, the travelogues, and the identifiable readership belong predominantly to an urban setting. Most, if not all, of these periodicals were published from urban centres such as Kolkata and Dhaka. This is not to say that periodicals for children and adults were not being published from other parts of Bengal. However,

they pale in comparison in terms of quantity to periodicals published from urban centres. The appendices note the presence of these periodicals.

Fourth, I have not included a study of juvenile periodicals from Britain in this thesis.<sup>11</sup> It has not been my intention to offer a comparative analysis, but rather to focus exclusively on travelogues published in juvenile periodicals in Bangla in the given timeframe.

There has been significant scholarly work in the domain of childhood and the idea of the child in colonial Bengal in particular, and India in general. In this thesis, while I have borrowed from both Sudhir Kakar and Ashis Nandy, the methodology has not been that of the psychoanalyst. In this thesis, I have tried, rather, to use the tools of a cultural historian, more familiar and readily available to me as a student of literature.

In this regard, Sibaji Bandyopadhyay's seminal work *Gopal Rakhal Dwandha Samas* (2013) is unavoidable for any researcher working in the domain of childhood and children's literature of Bengal.<sup>12</sup> The title of Bandyopadhyay's work draws from the binary set up by Bidyasagar in his primer *Barnaparichay* between the 'good' and the 'bad' [male] child – the former represented by Gopal and the latter by Rakhal. Bandyopadhyay has argued that colonialism also seeks to reduce the colonial subject to the state of infancy in terms of culture and civilisation and race while the colonial powers act as the parent who will lead this child to the enlightened world of adulthood. The domain of childhood, then, becomes a fraught space within the colonial experience and all the more important for that. For the colonised, the figure of the child is inscribed in the future tense. But is it only the 'good' boys of the world who will be able to free the nation from the shackles of imperialism? Bandyopadhyay shows that children's literature, as it develops in Bangla, comes to slowly rely on the figure of the 'unruly' child, in the works of Sukumar Ray, for instance, as the true forces that can destabilise the status quo.<sup>13</sup> The gendered aspect of this discourse does not go unnoticed by Bandyopadhyay.

Education, of course, was one of the most significant domains of childhood and in preparing the child to be the ideal citizen of an ideally free nation, but this, too, was under colonial control. On the one hand, the colonised Bengali middle-class sent

their children, mostly boys, and then, slowly, girls, to these institutions in the hope of a smoother path to upward mobility. At the same time, however, the Bengali literati also wrote and published works for the child to be read beyond school hours. It is in and through these texts that they often sought to provide a different kind of education to the child, increasingly wrapped in the garb of entertainment. The periodicals are an example of this endeavour.

Gargi Gangopadhyay's unpublished thesis on the emergence and development of a leisure reading space for children within the home in colonial Bengal with a particular focus on periodicals is an important work in the field. Her documentation of children's literature from Bengal and collation of the same in an online repository funded by the Indian Foundation for the Arts is a useful and significant resource.<sup>14</sup>

In Bangla, the various works of Bengali literary history and especially Asha Gangopadhyay and Khagendranath Mitra's work on the history of children's literature in Bengal are significant and useful texts in this field. Various essays on Bangla children's literature, especially those of Leela Majumdar, Pramatha Chaudhuri, and Buddhadev Bose, are able to move beyond the specificities of language to address more general concerns about the nature and characteristics of children's literature.

Within this more general context, Philippe Aries' work *Centuries of Childhood* is a seminal text in the field of childhood studies. One of his central tenets in the work—that childhood is not static, but a dynamic, ever-changing, ever-expanding idea—is one that this thesis also subscribes to. At the same time, however, the thesis disagrees with the notion of childhood being a 'modern' phenomenon as a universally applicable formula. In India, for one, the notion of a Hindu childhood was clearly inscribed and stated from a very early period. In Bengal, the mangalkabya texts are an important resource in understanding the ways in which the idea of childhood was developed in the medieval period as a phase and site of life distinct from adulthood. In the colonial period, when childhood, along with the family and what has contentiously been called the 'women's question' comes into the limelight, poised between tradition and modernity, contemporary periodicals wrote extensively about all three. This thesis has examined the articles published in various Bangla periodicals (with a particular focus on those targeting women readers) to understand

why, how, and in what ways the idea of childhood had developed from the medieval to the modern period.

Of the many identities the child [male] had been bestowed with within the colonial period—a student, a son of the motherland, a future citizen—traveller is not usually one. Indeed, a survey of the travelogues published in these juvenile periodicals reveals, most often, the solitary adult traveller, or, at most, accompanied by other adult friends and/or family members.

However, by the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth, the family tour or vacation was in vogue in Bengal. Rabindranath's early letters to his niece Indira Debi, written on his way to Darjeeling, humorously depict the many pitfalls of travelling with the family. In the short travelogue published in *Balak*, Rabindranath writes about travelling to Hazaribagh at the insistence of his young family members. Rarer still are travelogues written by children or young adults. My study of the periodicals has revealed three such accounts. All, interestingly, written by young women. and about family vacations.

Conducting research on travel writing was related to another aspect of my own experiences as a child – that of the many travels undertaken with my parents during the Puja vacations to various parts of the country, making good use of the vast network of the Indian Railways. These historical sites belonged mainly to the northern side of the Vindhya ranges, with only an occasional foray to the southern parts of the country. And under the garb of a holiday, lay an attempt to introduce a child to the history of the nation. While conducting a survey of my primary sources, I would find that in many ways, separated by a century or several decades, my experiences of travelling in the final years of the twentieth century resonated with travellers from the last decade of the previous century in terms of destinations and sites. In my travels and theirs, urban spaces like Delhi, Madras, Benares, and Lucknow, among others, were imbued with a sense of historicity. On the other hand, summer vacations to the hills, although in my personal experience few and far between, generally turned the lens away from the history of these spaces, as though such a history did not exist at all, to the grandeur of the sight – the snow-capped mountains in the distance.

The historical and the natural are the two predominant landscapes we encounter in the travelogues published in these periodicals. When it is not the mountains, it is the lush green countryside of Bengal with its flowering trees and bountiful fields. This representation often masks both the hands that literally and metaphorically produce this land as well as the very real presence of the ravages of the famines from which Bengal suffered – natural and man-made.

### **Literature Review**

The present work deals exclusively with travelogues about places within India. However, it is important to refer to Simonti Sen's seminal work in the field of research about Bengalis travelling abroad. Her monograph, *Travels to Europe: Self and Other in Bengali Travel Narratives 1870–1910* (2005), reads and analyses some of the earliest Bangla travel texts about journeys to Europe within the context of emergent nationalism, ideas of nationhood, and the colonial encounter. Travel, Sen argues, provided the Bengali in particular, but in a wider sense, the Indian in general, another scope for the formation of selfhood under colonial rule in its literal and metaphorical encounter with the West.

Simonti Sen's work comes after, as she herself acknowledges, two important scholarly texts in the field of nineteenth/early twentieth century Bangla/Indian travel writing. One is Inderpal Grewal's *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and Cultures of Travel* (1996) and the other is Antoinette Burton's *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Colonial Britain* (1997).

Jayati Gupta's recent work (2021) has focused on travel writing by women from Bengal between 1870 and 1940. Divided into three sections based on sites of travel – The West (England and Europe), India, and Japan, this work explores the 'gendered' notion of travel within the context of Bengali modernity and examines what it meant for women from this period to venture out of the andarmahal, write about these experiences, and bring them forth in print. Gupta places these texts within the broader context of the culture of travel in Bengal. Significantly, Gupta has noted the presence of travelling women in texts such as the mangalkabyas which predate British colonial rule in Bengal.

Pramod K. Nayar's work *Indian Travel Writing in the Age of Empire* (2020) focuses on the journeys undertaken by Indians [men] for specific purposes to do with their specific professions and their engagement with these 'foreign' spaces.

Two critical volumes on Indian travel writing edited by Somdatta Mondal (2010, 2021) have turned the lens on contemporary Indian travel writing as well and displays the continued academic engagement with Indian travel writing in contemporary scholarship.

My research also looks at Bangla scholarship in the field. I have mostly found a substantial body of scholarly essays and articles, rather than a complete, book-length work. What is worth noting, however, is also the substantial number of reprints, critical editions, and anthologies of Bangla travelogues that have been published in the last decade or more.<sup>15</sup> This includes, for instance, the collection edited by Abhijit Sen and Ujjal Ray (1999) of Bangla travelogues by women, and collections of travelogues of members of the Tagore family (2012), among others. Bijayram Sen's *Tirtha Mangal*, the first known Bangla travelogue, has also been reprinted (2009). The Bangla journal *Sampan* has recently brought out an issue on Bangla travel writing and travel culture which contains both scholarly articles as well as reprints of Bangla travelogues – some well-known, and some others that have passed somewhat into obscurity. Works of individual authors that have been reprinted with a critical introduction include Jadunath Sarbadhikari's *Tirtha Bhraman*, Durgacharan Rakshit's *Bharat Pradakhsin*, Durgabati Ghosh's *Paschimjatriki*, Ishwar Chandra Gupta's *Bhramankari Bondhur Patra*, Hariprabha Takeda's *Bangamahilar Japan Jatra*, and a collection of Upendrakishore's travelogues to the mountains published in various periodicals, among others.

"A working country is hardly ever a landscape," wrote Raymond Williams (1973). "The very idea of landscape," he added, "implies separation and observation (120)." In this thesis, the term 'landscape' has been approached from two perspectives – that of a work of art and the object of the work of art itself. The thesis has tried to trace the emergence and development of landscape painting in Britain and Bengal in trying to understand, following W. J. T Mitchell, how landscape functions as an ideology. Partha Mitter's work on art and nationalism (1994) is a guiding text in this regard.

A discussion on Bangla travel writing cannot be concluded without a focus on the project of translation. What makes this project all the more interesting is the fact that most of the texts translated are of women writers, barring the example of Rabindranath, who seems to occupy a state of exception in most fields in Bangla literature and culture.<sup>16</sup> Somdatta Mandal has translated three travelogues by Bengali women – Krishnabhabaini Das’s *England-e Bangamahila* [*A Bengali Lady in England*], Durgabati Ghosh’s *Paschimjatriki* [*The Westward Traveller*] and Hariprabha Takeda’s travelogue *Bangamahilar Japan Jatra* [*The Journey of a Bengali Woman to Japan*].<sup>17</sup> Takeda’s travelogue has also been translated by Debjani Sengupta.<sup>18</sup> Jayati Gupta’s work mentioned in this Introduction also contains extensive translations from the works she discusses.<sup>19</sup>

In this context, I would like to note that this thesis also involved a substantial amount of translation. The translations here are my own, unless otherwise stated. It has been particularly challenging to translate some of the nursery rhymes cited in the thesis, both in terms of language and imagery. Any shortcomings in these translations are entirely my own.

It is not possible, within the scope of this Introduction, and, in fact, even within the scope of this thesis, to discuss the sheer volume of travel writing produced by Bengali men and women within the period under purview of the thesis. However, considering the volume of works published as well as the consistency with which Bengalis appear to have travelled and written about travelling, it would certainly be a worthwhile task to compile a bibliography of such texts, at least within the timeframe of British colonial rule.

## **The Chapters**

The thesis is structured as four primary chapters, bookended by this Introduction and a Conclusion.

The first chapter explores the ways in which categories of the child and childhood developed in Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Within that broader context, it also attempts to explore and analyse the history and

development of children's literature in Bangla. In her essay on the element of 'play' in mangalkabya texts, Subhadipa Dutta (2021) notes that earlier scholarship on childhood studies have often taken as their entry point Bengal's contact with colonial powers. Dutta, however, seeks to move away from such a perspective and focuses instead on the medieval poems to find earlier concepts and ideas about childhood. In this chapter, the mangalkabya texts have also been used to understand earlier notions of childhood in Bengal. However, following Rimi. B. Chatterjee and Nilanjana Gupta (2009), this chapter agrees that the concept of children's literature appears to be one imported from Britain.

In understanding the idea of childhood, the chapter argues that a universal approach is not to be adopted and focuses, instead, on the specificity of the context. In examining the concept, it takes into account the various terms used in Bangla to denote childhood and also focuses on the names of the periodicals to understand how their editors were constructing the idea of childhood through them. Within this context, it also focuses on articles on child-rearing and family published in other periodicals, looking at women as their primary readership.

In the next couple of sections, the chapter discusses the definition and characteristics of children's literature with specific reference to articles and works in Bangla and also provides a brief outline of the history of vernacular children's literature. It then extensively discusses the publication history of juvenile periodicals, especially those within the timeframe under the purview of this thesis.

This is followed by a discussion of the reading habits of those who lived through this period as children, based on their memoirs and autobiographies. This also includes Rabindranath's experiences of reading at home as a child. The authors discussed in this section include Punyalata Chakrabarti, Shanta Debi, Leela Majumdar, and Parimal Goswami, among others.

The chapter also takes into account nursery rhymes and fairy tales that had been passed on from one generation to the next before the advent of print. It seeks to understand the ways in which images of Bengal as well as contemporary life and events were documented in these oral texts.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the development of the culture of travel in Bengal. It begins with a survey of pre-colonial travel and travel writing by Hindu Bengalis. In this section, mangalkabya texts serve as the primary literary sources, especially *Manasa Mangal* and *Chandi Mangal*. Both these texts include descriptions of travel undertaken for trade by their male protagonists. Significantly, as Jayati Gupta has also pointed out, the former also contains the description of a voyage undertaken by a woman—Behula—who sails to the underworld to plea for her husband’s life. David Curley (2011, 2018) has noted the presence of ‘fantastic’ accounts of travel in *Chandimangal*, for instance, which charts its protagonist Dhanapati’s journey to Sinhala for trade. These texts also show that while the journeys had a specific purpose, in every major pilgrimage site along their way down the river, the entourage stop to offer their respects to the gods and goddesses. From these texts, the chapter shows, it is possible to identify the existence of real riverine routes and popular pilgrim spots of Bengal and beyond.

The chapter also discusses some other early instances of Bangla travel writing which are religious in nature. One such is the travels of the medieval saint Chaitanya. Although Chaitanya himself did not write anything about his travels, his biographies contain descriptions of his journeys and he is considered to be one of the first travellers from Bengal whose journey was documented in Bangla. Bijayram Sen’s *Tirtha Mangal*, a secondary mangalkabya text, has also been discussed in this section with a particular focus on its subsequent publication in print in 1915 by the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad and its relation to forging a selfhood for [Hindu] Bengalis through a reclamation of a glorious past.

The section on early Bengali travellers and travel writing also includes Ishwar Chandra Gupta’s serialised travelogue *Bhramankari Bondhur Patra* as an example of a pre-railways text from the nineteenth century as well as to introduce the epistolary form which was a popular mode in the travel writing genre.<sup>20</sup>

The impact of the railways in India is a subject that has received immense scholarly attention and does not require a full account within the scope of this thesis. Rather, in the section on railways, the focus has been on, one, the contribution of Bengalis to the development of the railways in Bengal, and two, the reaction of the

Bengalis to the railways as displayed in literary texts and articles published in various periodicals.

The chapter then moves on to a discussion of real childhood memories of travelling by train by focusing on Punyalata Chakrabarti's memoir *Chhelebelar Dinguli* (1958). From this discussion, not only do we find an account of the experiences of travelling by train as a child, but we are also able to identify the key destinations of the freshly minted category of the tourist – the hills, the beach, 'paschim,' and that untranslatable phrase, the 'desher bari.' This chapter focuses on Darjeeling as a tourist destination because of its popularity as such, as well as its recurrence in several travelogues for both adults and children. In trying to understand the culture of travel in Bengal, this chapter also briefly discusses guidebooks and railway guides as sources.

The penultimate and the final chapters discuss the travelogues in relation to the types of landscapes they (re)produce. This has been the basis of the division of the two chapters into the categories of Historical Landscape and Natural Landscape.

The chapter on historical landscape begins with a discussion on the category of 'landscape' with reference to W. J. T. Mitchell's theorisation of landscape as ideology. Based on this theorisation, it then proceeds to discuss the relationship between landscape and empire. This section elucidates upon the relationship between travel and nationalism and how, in the (re)production of historical landscapes, the past (Hindu and glorious) intersects with the present in a temporal as well as spatial sense. With particular references to James Fergusson (1848, 1884) and Alexander Cunningham (1871), this section further discusses the kind of discourse on Indian civilisation that the colonial powers were producing in the nineteenth century through their travels across the country and also brings into discussion some of the Indian responses to these discourses. Rajendralal Mitra emerges as an important figure in this context. The chapter also notes the production and importance of images of ancient sites, particularly in the picturesque mode, that were born from these travels. This section also contains a brief account of the history of archaeology in the nineteenth century.

Within the broader context of understanding or discovering the nation through its history, this section then turns its attention to history textbooks that students encountered in colonial institutions. This brief study endeavours to understand the kind of image of their own nation that students were made familiar with at school. Within this backdrop, the chapter then discusses the historical landscape re(produced) in the travelogues published in juvenile periodicals.

In discussing the travelogues, this chapter has focused particularly on the travelogues of Abala Basu who had travelled extensively both within and outside the country. Here, the focus is on her travels within India. As mentioned before, by the second half of the nineteenth century, a significant number of Hindu/Brahmo women were travelling, mostly with their husbands, but also, significantly, writing about their journeys. But few of them wrote for children. Another travelogue by a woman in this section is “Mahishurer Patra” by Kumudini Khastagir which was published in the periodical *Sathi* (1300 BS).

The chapter on natural landscape begins with a discussion of picturesque landscapes. It discusses the origins of the picturesque landscape in British art and then, the ways in which the mode was used in representing the British colonies and its intrinsic relation to travel. It then brings into focus a discussion on Indian landscapes with particular references to the Bombay and Bengal School of Art. The focus of the rest of the chapter is on understanding how the travellers from Bengal were (re)producing natural landscapes in their travel writing. The significant aim of the chapter is to understand how ‘land’ becomes an important element in the idea of the landscape.

The discussion of travelogues begins with a detailed analysis of Rabindranath Tagore’s *Chhinnapatrabali* – a collection of letters written by the poet at various stages of his life to his niece Indira Debi. Although never published in any juvenile periodical, and indeed, never published as a book until many years after Rabindranath’s death, the text has been included in this chapter because the recipient and reader of these letters was a young girl and, in case of the first few letters at least, the author was also a young man. The letters of *Chhinnapatrabali* address many of the key questions about landscape, nation, and travel and provide a suitable point of entry for the discussion of the travelogues published in the juvenile periodicals.

The following section of the chapter focuses on the element of land in landscape within the broader context of the Permanent Settlement Act. It takes into account the many famines that ravaged rural Bengal over the course of the nineteenth century as well as the (contradictory) construction of the image of a lush, green rural Bengal as the real Bengal. Within this context, the chapter then turns its attention to a study of geography school texts published in the nineteenth century to examine how the topography of Bengal was introduced to students at school. It then proceeds to a discussion of the travelogues published in *Balak*.

The next section focuses on travelogues written about holidaying in the mountains, in the northern parts of both Bengal and India. It provides an extensive discussion of Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri's travelogues about Darjeeling. It is worth remembering, in this context, that Upendrakishore himself was an artist and the chapter discusses his landscape painting in some detail. It also discusses two travelogues written by two young girls—Nalinibala Basu's "Himalay Bhraman" (about Darjeeling and Phalut) and Snehalata Sen's "Mussoorie"—published in *Sakha* and *Sakha o Sathi* respectively.

This is followed by a discussion of travelogues that focuses on journeys where the natural landscape of a pilgrimage site is given more importance than its religious aspect, which can be read within the broader context of the emergence of secular travel and the (re)production of secular landscapes. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of travelogues that represent the sea-scape.

### **Concluding Remarks**

This thesis explores the ways in which landscapes are (re)produced in travel writing for children in major Bangla juvenile periodicals, beginning with *Sakha* and ending with *Sandesh*. The work hopes to shed light upon how ideas about the child and childhood are constructed through these periodicals and how the land—literal and metaphorical—is represented to them in these travelogues. In doing so, the present work is aware of its limitations and scope in terms of the sections of society on which it focuses and experiences it highlights.

This thesis is written in the Times New Roman typeface on Microsoft Word with a 12-point font and 1.5 line spacing. Bangla words have deliberately not been italicised. The ninth edition of the MLA Handbook has been followed for citations. Within the thesis, when referring to names of Bengalis, their first name has been used (Rabindranath or Upendrakishore, for instance) instead of their surnames, since that is the tradition in Bangla. In case of transliterations, I have followed pronunciations in Bangla for the names (for instance, Debi instead of Devi). With the title of Bangla books in the Bibliography, I have retained the spellings used by the publishers wherever available.

Finally, if there are any omissions, errors, or exclusions in this thesis, the responsibility is solely my own.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> The most popular of these was *Anandamela*, published by the ABP Group. The puja barshiki first appeared in 1971. According to Khagendranath Mitra, *Shishusathi* was the first Bangla juvenile periodical to publish a puja barshiki. In 1325 BS, Nagendranath Gangopadhyay, Rabindranth's son-in-law, was the figure behind the publication of *Parbani* which was also published around the time of the autumnal festivities. A second volume was published in 1327 BS.

<sup>2</sup> Signet Press, now an undertaking of Ananda Publishers, has recently re-published works of Sukumar Ray, for instance, with the original cover designs by his son Satyajit Ray. Another Bengali publishing house, Lalmati, has brought out new editions of Leela Majumdar's *Podi Pishir Bormi Baksho* and *Halde Pakhir Palak* besides the ongoing project of publishing her collected works over several volumes.

<sup>3</sup> There is also a facsimile edition of *Digdarshan*, the first-known Bangla periodical edited by John Clark Marshman, published by Bibekananda Book Centre, Haramoni Edition, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Gargi Gangopadhyay's unpublished thesis deals extensively with this.

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Chhandak Sengoopta, *The Rays before Satyajit*, 2016; Siddhartha Ghosh, *Siddhartha Ghosh Probandho Songroho*; Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, *Essays on Half-Tone Photography*, edited by Siddhartha Ghosh, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> See Hobsbawm's *Age of Revolution*. Important to note that his most famous set of books covers the period demarcated as the long nineteenth century, beginning with *The Age of Revolution* and followed by *The Age of Capital* and *The Age of Empire*.

<sup>7</sup> I had the opportunity to access issues of Nabanur at the British Library Reading Rooms and also presented a paper on it at the annual research scholars' conference at the Department of Bengali, Jadavpur University in 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Michael Fisher has edited and introduced the text along with a biographical sketch of the author. See, *The Travels of Dean Mahomet: An Eighteenth-Century Journey Through India*, 1997.

---

<sup>9</sup> James Edward Alexander translated *Shigurf Namah -i-Velaet; or, Excellent Intelligence concerning Europe: The Travels of Mirza Itesa Modeen in Great Britain and France*, 1827.

<sup>10</sup> See, Rajyeshwar Sinha, “Apan Hote Bahire: Atmaparichayer Khnoj o Musalman Bangalir Duti Bhraman Akhyan”, 2022. For a more detailed account of Bengalis in Britain, see also, Ghulam Murshid, *Kalapanir Hatchhani: Bilete Bangalir Itihas*, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> This is a vast field of study and the texts mentioned here are only a few in a very long list. I have also included texts that deal with children’s literature from the nineteenth century in general. See Stephanie Olsen, *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen 1880–1914*, 2014. Also see, Diana Dixon, “From Instruction to Amusement: Attitudes of Authority in Children’s Periodicals before 1914”, 1986. Kevin Carpenter’s illustrated catalogue is an excellent resource – *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics: English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to the Present Day*, 1983. The catalogue is from a loan exhibition from the Library of Oldenburg University, West Germany at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood; J. S. Bratton, *The Impact of Victorian Children’s Fiction*, 1981; Joseph Bristow, *Empire Boys: Adventure’s in a Man’s World*, 2016; Kirsten Drotner, *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751–1945*, 1988; Jeffrey Richards, edited, *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, 1989; and Michelle. J. Smith, *Empire in British Girls’ Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880–1915*, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> First published in 1991. I am referring here to the Karigar edition.

<sup>13</sup> Bandyopadhyay refers specifically to the character of Dashu in the collection of stories about schoolboys. Dashu, referred to in the title of the collection and by his schoolmates as ‘Pagla’ displays a pattern of behaviour that would be called ‘madness’ only by those whose logical power structures it challenges. Dashu, in this sense, epitomises the unruly, and, by extension, the ungovernable children of the colony.

<sup>14</sup> See <http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/index.php>

<sup>15</sup> It is to be noted that many of the travelogues were initially published in periodicals before they appeared as a book. In this Introduction, I have also left out the various travelogues that were published only in periodicals [for adult readers].

<sup>16</sup> Translations of Rabindranath’s travelogues include – *Letters from a Sojourner in Europe*, translated by Manjari Chakravarti, and edited by Supriya Roy, 2008; *Letters from Russia*, translated by Sasadhar Sinha, 1961; and *A Visit to Japan*, translated by Shakuntala Rao Sastri, 1961.

---

<sup>17</sup> See also, her translation of the travelogues of other members of the Tagore family in *Wanderlust: Travels of the Tagore Family*, 2014.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.yokohamatriennale.jp/english/2020/concept/source/bongomohilar-japan-jatra/>

<sup>19</sup> Other Bangla travelogues, not restricted to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, that have been translated include Syed Mujtaba Ali's *Deshe Bideshe*, translated by Najes Afroz, 2015; Umaprasad Mukhopadhyay's *Manimahesh*, translated by Sanjukta Dasgupta, 2006; Mohonlal Gangopadhyay's *Charanik*, translated by Jayanta Sengupta, 2021; and Sanjib Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Palamou*, translated by Arnab Bhattacharya, 2014 among others.

<sup>20</sup> I have referred to the reprint and later compilation, 2018.

## Chapter 1

### The Child, Childhood, and Children's Literature in Colonial Bengal

*On the seashore of endless worlds children meet.*

*The infinite sky is motionless overhead and the restless water is boisterous. On the seashore of endless worlds the children meet with shouts and dances.*

*They build their houses with sand, and they play with empty shells. With withered leaves they weave their boats and smilingly float them on the vast deep. Children have their play on the seashore of worlds.<sup>1</sup>*

– Rabindranath Tagore

A wide range of disciplines and arts have been concerned with the stage of childhood and the figure of the child. It has been considered, for instance, as a state of innocence, closest to the Divine, looked back upon with a nostalgic gaze as a pure and pristine state to which, much like the idyllic Garden of Eden, there is no return. In other instances, children have merely been considered miniature adults, always in a state of waiting, their identity inscribed in the future tense. In this context especially, educating the child has been a significant concern of many societies in different ages.<sup>2</sup> Speaking in more general terms, how a society engages with the figure of the child and the phase of childhood allows us to understand how it thinks about and constructs itself.

An important moment in childhood studies was the publication of Phillippe Aries's seminal work *Centuries of Childhood* (1962). Aries argued that childhood is neither a monolithic construct nor a homogenous entity. Rather, it is dynamic and

multiple – constantly changing, developing, and evolving depending upon time and space.<sup>3</sup>

In this same vein, Kimberley Reynolds and others have pointed out that literature for children, in every epoch in every place become the site where the varying ideas and definitions of childhood and children are constructed and reflected.<sup>4</sup> Defining children’s literature also inevitably grapples with the question of what constitutes the child.

Aries also established a link between the emergence of childhood as a category and the advent of modernity in the Western world. Modernity, characterised by the emergence of self-definition and self-construction (often in the binary opposition to the Other), was also what scholars of childhood focusing on Bengal turned to in their analysis of this category. Modernity, in this context, began with colonial contact. Subhadipa Dutta, in her essay (2021), however, while noting this tendency, seeks to move beyond and turn to the depictions of childhood play in the Bangla verse narratives or mangalkabyas.<sup>5</sup> This chapter also intends to follow Dutta’s gaze.

One of the prominent theoretical tools applied to childhood studies is that of psychology and psychoanalysis. In his seminal work on childhood in India, Sudhir Kakar (2004) analyses the “inner world” of the Hindu child. In his discussion, the child is predominantly male, although he has noted the significant difference between the male and the female child within a Hindu, patriarchal social order.<sup>6</sup>

In *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*, Ashis Nandy notes that the first characteristic of colonialism is a state of mind in the coloniser and the colonised which he calls a “colonial consciousness” (1991, 1). In this colonial consciousness, Nandy argues, the colonised is seen as a child – a figure associated with ideas such as immaturity and primitivism, while the coloniser is the *pater familias* that will lead the child to maturity and adulthood. The idea of reward and punishment on which the colonial rule based itself, Nandy argues, also sought to create a distinction between the ‘child-like’ and the ‘childish’ in the colonised. The former was innocent, ignorant, but willing to learn, and therefore a category that could be reformed through modernisation, westernisation, and even Christianisation (15–

16). However, the latter was unwilling to learn, ungrateful, savage, and disloyal, and hence incorrigible. Tough administration was therefore required to quell such a rebellious subject (16).<sup>7</sup> Nandy cites the examples of John Stuart Mill and Cecil Rhodes as reflective of this worldview. The ideological defense that Mill advanced for imperialism stemmed, Nandy notes, from the “enmeshing of the private responsibilities of the father with his views of Britain’s responsibilities to the societies under its patriarchal suzerainty” (1984–85, 360).

In *Gopal Rakhal Dvandasamas*, Sibaji Bandyopadhyay makes use of this argument in studying colonial Bangla children’s literature. He too notes that in the eyes of the coloniser, the inhabitants of the colony are children. On the other hand, when that oppressed group searches for freedom from that humiliation, the dream of national awakening and identity is expressed in their imagination through the figure of the child. Bandyopadhyay places children’s literature at the intersection of these two contrary tendencies (62). He further states that under imperialism, the presence of adults in juvenile literature inevitably takes on a significant dimension since adults themselves are treated as children by colonial rule. Therefore, children’s literature becomes not just the medium of self-expression, but also a narration of the self for adults – a life-story of a community. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, children’s literature was entering the households of the Bengali literate class, which then became a leisure reading space.

In her thesis, Gargi Gangopadhyay has studied the creation of this space for children in colonial Bengal. She argues that this space was “consciously crafted” by adults to “free childhood from its colonial fetters” (18).

The creation of this leisure reading space and the proliferation of children’s literature in Bengal, coincided, as it did in the West, particularly England, with the advent of industrialisation, capitalism, and the emergence of a new middle class. Rimi B. Chatterjee and Nilanjana Gupta have noted further that children’s literature was a category “imported into India by the British” and as in Victorian England, “the Indian idea of the child inhabited a paradoxical space, a being both innocent and exploited, to be protected as well as coerced. [...] The child was simultaneously the future of India and the person most thoroughly excluded from debates about where that future should go” (9).

The subject of this chapter is the larger context of Bangla children's literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century within which the juvenile periodicals and the travelogues published in them will be located. In studying this, the chapter will also include a brief historical overview of the development of children's literature in Bengal. One of the primary tasks of this study will be to examine and understand how Bengal came to be represented in these works, focusing in particular on the production and (re)production of landscapes within these texts. This will provide the context within which landscapes in travelogues can then be placed and analysed. One of the key areas under analysis for this purpose will be fairy tales and nursery rhymes.

The chapter will also investigate how the child and childhood were constructed within the evolving colonial social fabric, keeping in mind, in particular, the fault-lines of gender, class, and caste that divide and intersect in the formation of these categories. It must be noted that the 'child' and 'childhood' discussed here are limited in their scope, in the sense that they refer predominantly to the middle and upper middle-class Hindu/Brahmo child, although not always a male child.

This chapter will turn its attention to the ways in which the editors of the juvenile periodicals under study constructed and defined their readers. It will also turn to memoirs and autobiographies of those who lived through this period to see how they themselves reminisce about childhood and through such reminiscences, contribute to the construction of the image of the child and childhood in colonial Bengal. These memoirs and autobiographies also provide us, the reader, removed from them by time and space, a glimpse into the 'leisure reading space' that was emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Shanta Debi's memoir, for instance, will offer a glimpse into their own private library at home. In understanding the changing nature of the image of the child and what constitutes childhood, this chapter will also look back at pre-colonial Bengal to search for traces of such constructions and definitions in Bangla literature from this period.

## The Child

If one thinks about it, one realises that there is nothing as old as a child. Adults have been deeply influenced by time, place, and culture, but the child has remained the same for the last hundred thousand years. Eternal and unchanging, the child is born every day among us in human form, yet he remains just as fresh, sweet, and innocent as on the first day. The reason that children remain so universally pure and clean is that they are Nature's creations; adults, in contrast, are to a great extent the product of their own doings. Rhymes, like children, are born naturally of the human mind.

- Rabindranatha Tagore<sup>8</sup>

In the introductory poem to the collection of poems entitled *Shishu*, Rabindranath imagines the child as a universal being, embodying what he perhaps considers to be the essential characteristics of the pure, human heart – not in search of material wealth, unperturbed by far-away storms, unflinching in the face of death, happy to build castles of sand, and cast leaf-boats on the tumultuous sea.

However, we know that there is nothing of the universal in a child – except perhaps in the modern day and age of its definition pertaining to age. The registration of births and the exact record of dates of birth is a relatively new phenomenon in India. It wasn't until 1969 that registration of births was made mandatory by law, and even after that, statistics show that actual registrations were quite low. In common parlance, births were remembered primarily through natural events or incidents, very often, disasters. The year that the monsoons came late, the month there was a huge storm, the year there was a poor yield of crops—these were the markers by which families remembered the time of a child's birth—connected to the rhythm of nature, or rather, its calamities. Within a structure that usually had several children in the family, the exact date of birth was not considered important; not until institutions, especially the school, asked for the child's age. In such instances, a hasty calculation based on memory would lead to an answer. In some Hindu households, an

astrological chart prepared right after the birth of a child could offer some certainty regarding the age of the child.

Traditionally, Brahminical Hindu society demarcated four phases of human [male] life, corresponding in numerical value to the ‘ages of man’ as described by Aries. These four phases were brahmacharya, garhasthya, banaprastha, and sanyas. Brahmacharya was the period of education, typically taking place at the home of the guru. Garhasthya signified the period of domestic life. In Banaprastha, the man would give up the life of a householder to live a hermit’s life in the forest until finally in Sanyas, he would renounce the material world for spiritual pursuits until his death.

It may be argued that the establishment of colonial schools brought about a change in the ways of defining the beginning and end of childhood, particularly in case of the male child. Education was now time-bound and at the end of this time, the [male] child would emerge into the public world as an adult.

In Bangla, there are different words to denote stages within the phase that is childhood – broadly, shoishab and koishor, but also perhaps a third category called balyokal. Shoishab would roughly be the period of infancy up to puberty. Adolescence would then translate to koishor. It is also worth noting that both these terms are gender neutral in a language that can tend to subscribe to the gender binary. While the terms for the phases are gender neutral, the Bangla words for the child and adolescent are often not. Balak and balika—words that are also titles of juvenile periodicals—distinguish between the male and female child, as do the terms for adolescents – kishor and kishori. Tagore’s memoir of his childhood (more accurately, ‘boyhood’) is entitled *Chhelebela*, but his collection of poems for children referred to above use a gender-neutral term for children – Shishu.

The poems in *Shishu*—sixty-two in total—were compiled by Mohit Chandra Sen and published in 1903. The poems were written in and around that year. The poems in the collection mostly feature a boy either as the narrator or the central figure. *Shishu* is possibly the first collection of poems in Bangla to feature a child [male] as both the subject and the protagonist of most of its poems. The unnamed boy is usually referred to as Khoka – a familial Bangla word for a male child. In some of the poems, Khoka is talking to his mother, in some others, his mother is talking with

him. Other male figures—an elder brother and an ever-absent father—are mentioned in some of the poems. In an exception, the poem “Biggno” features the boy’s younger sister, referred to in the poem as Khuki – the familial term for a female child.

There are about six poems in the collection about a girl child. These are distinctly different, in both tone and content, than the poems about the male child. “Pakhir Palak”—a poem about a little girl trying to engage her mother’s attention with a beautiful feather she has found—does not portray the loving, affectionate mother who appears in the poems about Khoka. Instead, the mother here pays no attention to her daughter’s pleasure at finding a feather and disregards her enthusiasm about showing her the same, saying, “Kiba jinisher chhiri” [What sort of a thing is that!] (142).

The mother-son relationship takes centre stage in the poems in *Shishu*. Kakar has pointed out that the identity of the Hindu [male] child is intrinsically linked with the identity of his mother—a dyadic relationship from which he then emerges into the world of men—quite literally crossing the threshold of the andarmahal, or the inner quarters of the home, to the bahir mahal, the outer quarters (1981, 52). Once this journey has taken place, the male child no longer has a free pass to the inner quarters.

The girl child, on the other hand, is predominantly confined to the inner quarters. This begins to change among elite urban families when girls begin to attend school and more women begin to claim their space in the public domain – literally and metaphorically. The simple act of stepping out into the public world was one way of becoming visible and claiming space. So was travelling. Another way in which women, and of course, only certain sections of women, made their presence felt in the world outside was through writing – especially in contemporary Bangla periodicals.<sup>9</sup>

Girlhood, however, was still a different matter. Sudhir Kakar has noted that his study of the [Hindu] Indian childhood centres around the male child because the girl child is largely absent from all the ancient texts he uses to construct his arguments (18). When the woman does appear in Hindu ancient scriptures, it is only to cement her role first as a daughter, then as a wife, and finally as a mother. With the figure of the mother central to the identity of the woman, the young girl within the Hindu household was trained from a young age to be a wife and a mother.<sup>10</sup> Rituals within

the home, performed by these girls, children by all parameters, were usually for finding a suitable husband.

In Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay's *Pather Panchali*, for instance, Durga is seen performing the punyipukur ritual. This ritual, performed at home, does not require the presence of a male priest. Here, the young brati, or the one performing the ritual, has to recite a rhyme in place of a Sanskrit mantra in which she asks for a good husband.

Giribala Debi's autobiographical novel *Raybari* is a bildungsroman that charts the coming of age of its protagonist Binu in the first decade of the twentieth century. The novel places the female experience at its centre and is also important as a documentation of the everyday life of a young girl within the inner quarters of a zamindari household in rural Bengal in the early twentieth century. The novel describes several rituals performed by the women and girls of the Ray household, including the punyipukur brata by Binu's young sister-in-law Toru.

The various rituals and the idea of the woman of the household as the incarnation of Goddess Laxmi, Bengal's very own 'angel in the house,' only cemented further the roles ascribed to women in ancient scriptures even as the world outside debated their role within both the private and the public spheres.<sup>11</sup>

Within this context, the memoirs and autobiographies by women under consideration in this chapter make for an interesting study, even if and also because they serve only to prove the exception.

### **Childhood in Precolonial Bengal**

*Let my children go to hell everyday  
Let the hangman tear their bodies apart,  
Let creatures of the night gauge their eyes out,  
Rip their tongues out in broad daylight.  
Let vultures have fun with their chained*

*And massacred limbs. What does it matter to me?*

*I, who pray every day –*

*“Let your children always have milk and rice.*

– Birendra Chattopadhyay, “Amar  
Sontan Jak Protyoho Noroke”<sup>12</sup>

Written in 1970, Birendra Chattopadhyay’s poem “Amar Sontan Jak Protyoho Noroke” [Let My Children Go to Hell Everyday] portrays a violent and disturbing image of the killing of youth by state apparatus with thinly-veiled references. The use of ‘sontan’—‘children’, or ‘offspring’ in translation—is rooted in a much older tradition of imagining the people of a land or the nation as typically sons of the soil—children of the motherland—an image particularly predominant in the nationalist movement for independence. Chattopadhyay’s poem also harks back to a literary tradition of precolonial Bengal – the mangalkabya. Here, an iconic line from Bharatchandra Ray Gunakar’s narrative poem *Annadamangal* returns laced with dramatic irony.

Bharatchandra’s *Annadamangal*, at least in its title, aligns itself with that significant body of work in Bangla vernacular literature referred to as the mangalkabya. The disclaimer comes from historians of Bangla literature who object to the inclusion of *Annadamangal* in the corpus of mangalkabyas written between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. This is because unlike other texts in this vast body of literature, *Annadamangal* was written with a different purpose – not to be sung during religious performances, but for the audience at Raja Krishnachandra’s court. However, Bharatchandra is often considered to be one of the first significant poets writing in the vernacular and *Annadamangal*, no matter its literary merits, is considered to be an important text in this context. David Curley has pointed out:

[...] the mangal-kavya first began to be described as a genre by Hindu Bengali nationalist scholars in the 1880s, who edited and printed manuscripts, introduced them as objects of national

historical and literary study, and sought a name which would echo their term in Bamla [sic] for epic, *mahakavya*. (2011, 184).

Spanning almost five centuries, if not more, the mangalkabyas become the site of the emergence and development of Bengali identity and history. In this context, too, a discussion of the mangalkabyas seem relevant to the present work.

The mangalkabyas were not a monolithic tradition, nor were they static. They developed over centuries in the hands of several poets. Dealing mostly with the veneration of a single deity, these long narrative poems have often been described as being the ‘pure’ repository of Bengali-ness. Their claim to such an epithet had to do as much with their form as their content. Gopal Halder, in his outline of Bangla literature (2005) uses the non-hyphenated term ‘kathakabita’ to describe these narrative poems as opposed to the ‘geetikabita.’ The latter is poetry that may be sung while the latter is poetry that may be recited or narrated. Halder further argues that the content of these verses belonged entirely to the Bengalis. It was not borrowed from the Hind-Aryan civilization (30). As the form developed through the centuries, in the period designated as post-Chaitanya, Halder identifies a mix of two traditions in these verses, with terms he borrows from Suniti Kumar Chattopadhyay – the ‘Matter of Bengal’ (of which *Manasamangal*, *Chandimangal*, *Dharmamangal* are examples) and the ‘Matter of Sanskrit World’ (of which *Durgamangal*, *Annadamangal*, *Gangamangal* are examples) (105).

*Annadamangal* eulogises Annada or Annapurna – the Goddess of fertility and harvest. As was the case with other verses that dealt either exclusively with the ‘matter of Bengal’ or was a mix of two worlds, Bharatchandra’s *Annadamangal* also presents its audience with a domesticised Goddess—a wife, a mother, a daughter—a familiar and familial figure rather than a distanced figure of the Hindu pantheon. Two different discourses emerge here from our reading of *Annadamangal*. One is the discourse of imagining the land as Mother. The other is the construction of this proverbial Mother’s children.

It is worth noting that a fragment from *Annadamangal* titled ‘Annapurna o Ishwari Patani’ had been a staple in the syllabus for students in government schools in

West Bengal for many years after Independence. The iconic line mentioned earlier, the one Chattopadhyay ironically twists to great effect, comes from this fragment. Here, Annapurna is crossing the river on a boat and Ishwari Patani, the boatman, is suspicious but unaware of his passenger's true identity. When she alights from the boat and her identity is finally revealed, the Goddess, pleased with Ishwari, offers to grant him a wish. This wish is articulated by Ishwari in the now-proverbial line – “Let my children always have milk and rice.”<sup>13</sup>

In her study of childhood and play in the mangalkabyas, Subhadipa Dutta has noted the distinct phases of childhood and the rituals associated with the various phases that these verses describe. She identifies (175) five phases into which childhood is divided:

1. Newborns
2. Infants – from the age of six months to one year
3. Children aged between one and three
4. Children aged between three and five
5. Children above the age of five

Dutta writes:

While emphasizing the episodes of growing up [of the major characters of the narrative], the Mangala poets provide a detailed picture of the understanding of children's growth by the pre-colonial Bengali-speaking community, in which the transition from one stage to another was closely entangled with various traditional symbolic performances (176).

These rituals were as follows:

1. Nabhichedana – the severing of the umbilical cord following the child's birth
2. Pancutya rite – performed on the fifth day after birth. Women would offer worship to Panchu Thakur. The objective of this offering was to secure the well-being and long life of the newborn.

3. The ceremonial worship of Shasthi – the goddess of newborns was performed on the sixth day. The sixth night was considered to be auspicious. This was the night when the God of Destiny—the Bhagyavidhata—would enter the room where the mother and child lay to inscribe the child’s destiny on his/her forehead.
4. Purification rituals in the form of baths took place on the seventh (uthhani) and ninth (navanatta) day. After this, the mother could enter the main house with the infant for the first time.
5. Ashta-kalai was observed on the eighth day. On this occasion, children of the neighbourhood would be invited to the house and fed and gifted toys.
6. Purification rites would again be performed on the twenty-first (ekusya) or thirtieth (ekattrisa) day.
7. In the sixth or seventh month, on the day of the rice-eating ceremony, the *naamkaran* or naming ceremony would also be performed.
8. The first year of the child’s birth would be celebrated by the family. After the child turned one, they would get their first haircut (cudakarana).
9. Sometime between the age of five and seven, the child would learn to write. This ceremony was called haatekhodi (175–76).<sup>14</sup>

Dutta has further noted that the descriptions of play in the mangalkabyas reveal the gendered roles ascribed to children. David Curley, she notes, had argued that gender in the mangalkabyas did not exist in terms of strict binaries. Rather, roles of men and women were often interchangeable. Women, for instance, were seen engaging in warfare, a typically male enterprise. However, Dutta argues, in the world of the children of the mangalkabyas, gender roles *are* more strictly employed. For instance, male children are described as engaging in physical games while female children are depicted playing with dolls, to cite one example (181).

If nothing else, the gendered construction of childhood was carried into the nineteenth century and survived long after the political end of colonial rule. That, however, is another story.

With the emergence and proliferation of print technology and within a changing social fabric due to the encounter with the West, as previously noted, the family and the role of women within it also began to change and became a matter of public discourse. Children and childhood were a significant part of this. In the next section, we turn our attention to periodicals from the nineteenth and early twentieth century to see how these changes were reflected in the works of contemporary authors.

### **The Child and Childhood in Contemporary Periodicals**

Discussions about the family, especially the role of the woman within the family, are scattered throughout the periodicals in this timeline. As Tanika Sarkar, Geraldine Forbes, and others have pointed out, the family, and more specifically, the role of the woman within the family and society became a matter of great concern in colonial Bengal where the Bengali man, unable to exercise autonomy in the outside world, turned inwards, literally and metaphorically. The home, the domain of the woman, became the repository of traditional values and moral codes while the figure of the woman became the site of modernity via social reforms.<sup>15</sup>

It is no surprise that discussions about the child appear mostly in conjunction with the role of the woman as a mother within the home. The social reforms of the nineteenth century—prohibition of widow immolation, widow remarriage, women’s education—brought changes, albeit to certain sections, but it did not challenge the status quo. Nor did it radically alter existing social structures.

This section, following Pradip Basu’s compilation of articles on the home and family, turns its attention to the articles specifically on children [predominantly the male child] – answering or explaining how to raise them, educate them, and discipline them. In the Introduction, Basu writes, “The primary basis of the modern concept of the child was that the child is essentially an innocent and naïve being and that its mind and body must be developed with equal degrees of caution and care” (27). The family, he notes, had a more significant role to play in this task than the school, and within the family, the responsibility lay primarily with the mother. He also noted that within a colonised society, the family is associated with ideas of the formation of selfhood

and national identity, and the child is often marked as the future citizen who must be trained and nurtured for a better world (27).

The periodicals from which these articles have been combined are *Bamabodhini*, *Abodh Bandhu*, *Paricharika*, *Sadharani*, *Anjali*, *Mahila*, *Sakhi*, *Antahpur*, *Bharat Mahila*, *Janmabhoomi*, *Grihastha*, *Mahishya*, *Bharati*, *Garhasthya*, *Saptahik Saogat*, and *Matri Mandir*. Of these, this section will focus on selected articles published till 1914. These articles, most often, do not directly seek to define the child or childhood and focus more on child rearing and the role of the mother. However, it is possible to extract from them of how the child and childhood was being constructed within a changing society and family from the 1860s to the early decades of the twentieth century.

In an article titled “Shishu Binayan,” published in *Abodh Bandhu* in 1867, the [anonymous] author describes the child as a naïve creature who cannot distinguish between the good and the bad and merely imitates the actions of others (625). Hence, the author argues, a good example must be set by those in his immediate surroundings, especially, of course, the parents. The duty of parents, the author argues, is the most important duty of all, for it is in their hands that the glory or downfall of a clan is dependent in equal measure, and it is for this reason, the author argues, that parents may even be bestowed with the epithet of “true nation-builders” (625). An article published in *Bamabodhini* similarly identifies the child as naïve but also as an eternal being (635).

In another article also entitled “Shishu Binayan” (1895), the author appears to be more pragmatic regarding the innocence of children. “We do not believe children are born sinners,” the author says, “nor do we believe that they are divine beings” (671). The first part of the statement possibly alludes to the Christian notion prevalent until around the seventeenth century that children are born as sinners, representing the fall from heaven, and it is from a state from which they must then be rescued, often through strict and stringent measures. The author of this article goes on to say that even many sage persons are wonderstruck with the divine attributes of children, such as their innocence and their gentleness, and proclaim that heaven is their abode. But while these divine attributes are a part of children, waiting to blossom, the child is equally like an animal, because, points out the author, the child also has several

animal-like qualities – greed, jealousy, pride, and selfishness, among others. In order for the child to truly become a divine being, such attributes need to be weeded out. In nurturing the divine attributes and weeding out the wretched, the author notes the important role that parents have to play. What then is the method of good parenting? The author takes recourse to Chanakya and his famous dictum – “Lalane bahabo dosha tarane bahabo guna/ Tasmāt putranca bhṛityanča tarayēt notu lalayēt.” This roughly translates to – “there are several faults in nurturing [lalan] and several virtues in disciplining [taran]; for this reason, discipline the child and the servant.” But Chanakya also says, and the author quotes, “Lalayēt pañchabarshani dashbarshani tarayēt – “nurture for five years and discipline for the next ten” (671). Indumadhab Mullick’s article “Shishur Palan,” published in *Sakhi* in 1901, also refers to this same shloka by Chanakya and adds the next line—“Praptetu shorośho barshe putrang mitra badacharet”—once the child [male] is sixteen, he may be treated as a friend” (687). What we see here is possibly one way in which childhood was defined in ancient India by age – sixteen being the year in which the child steps into adulthood, marked by a transition in their relationship with their parents, who can now treat them as a friend, and, by extension, an equal.

In three articles, we find an attempt to categorise childhood: “Stree o Swamir Kathopokathan” (*Bamabodhini*, 1868–69), Shri Radhikaprasad Ghosh Chaudhuri’s “Santan Palan Sambandhe Koyekti Upodēsh” (*Bamabodhini*, 1904), and an article by a kobiraj [an ayurved practitioner] entitled “Shishu Palan,” published in *Janmabhoomi* in 1910.

The first of these is supposed to be, according to its title, a conversation piece between a husband and wife. However, it is actually the husband answering the questions of the wife, and beyond asking questions, the latter seems to have nothing else to say. At the outset, the man says that the discussion can be divided into three parts—shoishababastha, balyabastha, and koisharabastha—following the stages of childhood (628). Translated, these three phases would possibly be – infancy, childhood, and adolescence. There is no explanation, however, regarding when each phase ends and the other begins, nor what marks these transitions.

In the two other articles, we find a different categorisation, and one is accompanied by markers of age as well. The category is phrased slightly differently in

the two articles. In Radhikaprasad's article they are *dugdhopayee*, *dugdhanneshi*, and *annabhoji* – milk-drinker, milk-based food eater, and only food eater (704). In the article penned by the medical practitioner Girijabhushan Ray Sengupta, the categories are *dugdhojibi*, *dugdhannojibi*, and *annajibi* (714). The meaning is essentially the same. However, Radhikaprasad also goes on to mention the age for each category. The first category corresponds to the first year of the child's life, the second up to the age of two, and the third till the age of fifteen (714). Here, too, then, the overall phase of childhood seems to come to an end at the age of fifteen.

I want to end this section by focusing on an article published in *Mahila* in 1913. Entitled “Mata o Santan Shikhsa,” and written by Binaybhushan Sarkar, this article directly refers to the changing idea of the child from ancient to modern times. Sarkar argues that in the ancient age, educators thought of children as having minds which were akin to blank slates or like malleable mud that could be given any shape or form (764–65). The first image clearly carries the connotation of *tabula rasa*, although that is a relatively modern concept.

Citing the example of Froebel, Binaybhushan then argues that the child is born with certain innate knowledge, although this knowledge is present in the form of a seed.<sup>16</sup> A similar notion, we have already seen, was echoed by the author of “Shishu Bianayan” published in *Bamabodhini*. It is also worth noting that in this context, Binaybhushan refers to the traditional concept of the Bhagyabidhata entering the child's room to inscribe their fate on their foreheads, defending it against charges of superstition and arguing that it is essentially a metaphor for the idea of some sort of innate knowledge present in the child as an infant.

How, then, was this knowledge to be cultivated? In the second half of the nineteenth century, beyond the domain of school textbooks, a new literature for children began to emerge in Bengal – the first wave of children's literature. The following section discusses the various ways in which children's literature in Bangla has been defined.

## Defining Children's Literature

“Few in our country can write simple texts suitable for children. One of the reasons for this is, we are a race born old. So, we consider most things in the world to be juvenile. [...] We don't want our children to be child-like; how, then, can we like books that are child-like, let alone compose them?”

- Rabindranath Tagore [review of Troilokyanath Mukhopadhyay's *Kankabati* published in *Sadhana* (Falgun, 1299 BS)]

In the essay “Reconstructing Childhood: A Critique of the Ideology of Adulthood” (1984–85), Ashis Nandy distinguishes between two categories of the colonised created by the coloniser—“the child-like” and “the childish”—a binary he had already introduced in the Preface to *The Intimate Enemy*. The attributes of the “child-like” among the colonised (here, India) are innocence, ignorance, a willingness to learn, masculinity, and loyalty. This category is corrigible and may be reformed. The “childish”, however, are ignorant and *unwilling* to learn and therefore *incorrigible*. Strict discipline and tough administration may thus be required to keep the “childish” tendencies at bay (Preface, 16). “The colonial ideology,” writes Nandy, “required savages to be children, but it also feared the savages could *be like children* [italics mine]” (361).

As Nandy has further argued, “children do not merely define childhood (361).” Children symbolise, he argues, a criticism of the “normal” and “rational” visions of adults of what a society should be like (361). When Tagore regretfully says that Bengalis do not allow their children to be ‘child-like’, he is possibly referring to the potential of the attribute of child-likeness to destabilise the ‘rational’ world order imposed by adults.

In 1947, *Prabasi* published an article entitled “Bangla Shishu Sahitya Sambandhe Koyekti Katha” by Usha Biswas. Referring to Tagore, she argues that one of the problems that plague our ideas regarding children's literature is that we do not

consider children as human beings. That is to say, the tendency to infantilise relegates children to a category of their own, which seems to be distinct from the category of the human.

Pramathanath Bishi, in his reminiscences of Santiniketan, also notes this tendency in the domain of education as well as children's literature, contrasting it with the system prevalent in the school established by Rabindranath. He writes, "The problem with the traditional system of education is that it considers children to be infantile and adults as all-knowing" (144). This leads to a watering-down of the subjects presented to a child, and, Bishi argues, this same dangerous ailment now afflicts Bangla juvenile literature (144).

Usha Biswas and Pramathanath Bishi are both referring to a problem that lies at the heart of children's literature as it grapples with understanding, defining, and perhaps even constructing the nature of its reader. Later in her article, Biswas says it is difficult to draw a clear line between children's literature and literature for adults. As they grow, she says, children read certain texts that are not really a part of the domain of children's literature. As examples, she cites Tagore's plays *Daakghor* and *Mukut*, Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Ramer Sumati* and *Bindur Chhele*, and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Anandamathh* and *Kapalkundala*, among other works (705).

In the same vein, Chitra Deb, in her essay on Bangla children's literature, (1981) writes that literature meant for adolescents or young adults (Deb uses the term 'kishor') is considered to be a part of children's literature (shishu sahitya). In general, she says, literature meant for those aged between four or five and fourteen or fifteen is what is defined as children's literature. She goes on to say that it is not very easy for adults to write books for very small children. Just as adolescents ignore the possibility of admonition and read books meant for adults, so too do children read books meant for adolescents (254).

Leela Majumdar, in the essay "Chhotoder Jonyo Boi," also advances a similar argument (1981). She writes that when one says 'books for children' or 'juvenile literature' in English, everyone assumes that it is meant to be read by those between the ages of five and sixteen, that is, school-going children. However, she argues, in

this part of the world, some object to this categorisation. Majumdar writes, “They say, after eight or nine, one is no longer a ‘shishu’, but a ‘kishor’” (242). Although different kinds of books are written for the child and the adolescent, it is convenient to think of all children aged between five and sixteen when one uses the phrase ‘shishu sahitya’ or children’s literature, Majumdar argues, although a closer look will reveal that most of these books are written for those aged between ten and twelve (242).

Herself a distinguished name in Bangla children’s literature, Majumdar has also engaged with the nature and definition of children and children’s literature in her autobiography. “The main tenets of children’s literature have to be humour and honesty. One has to write only of things which shall arouse empathy and respect in the minds of children for all creatures of the living world” (349), she writes in *Pakdondi*. Thoughts on children’s literature are scattered throughout her autobiography. She sees herself as a children’s writer first and foremost. On the role of children’s literature, she writes,

Beyond affection and inspiration, from a logical point of view, it may be said that children’s literature has a much larger role to play than literature for adults in the formation of the future of humankind. It is through children’s literature that the thought process of boys and girls are developed. This is the time to plant the seeds of a strong ideal in their minds. A strong sense of values also emerges at this time (350).

In his essay “Shishu Sahitya,” Buddhadeb Basu combines the memories of his own reading habits from childhood with the history of Bangla juvenile literature with a focus on the twentieth century, especially Sukumar Ray (1363 BS)<sup>17</sup>. He divides the history of Bangla juvenile literature into two distinct phases. In the first phase, those who wrote for children wrote only for children. But this begins to change in the second phase and now, authors writing for children are also, if not predominantly, writers for adults. Basu further identifies a ‘Golden Age’ of Bangla juvenile literature which is also, according to him, the inaugural moment of children’s literature in Bangla, as well as ‘Golden’ in terms of its quality. Authors in this period include Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, Jogindranath Sarkar, and, slightly later, writers like Sukhalata Rao. Basu focuses largely on the Raychaudhuri family in this essay,

looking closely, particularly, at Sukumar Ray. In describing their contribution to the domain of Bangla juvenile literature, Basu credits the Raychaudhuris as being able to “speak like children” – which is not to say that it is the way children themselves would actually say things, but in a way that would make them feel as though it were being said in their way. Thus, he argues, there is no artificiality in the works of these authors. There is no back-slapping, no sympathy or sense of duty of the teacher. These authors maintain their respect for children while never forgetting their own sense of Self and steer clear of caricatures (159–161). Basu identifies four qualities of literature from this Golden Age – pure, innocent, beautiful, and free (159).

In his work on Bangla children’s literature, Nabendu Sen (2000) has noted the following characteristics:

1. Children’s literature is primarily created to be heard by children [shishu] and read by the young.
2. Children are the primary readers of children’s literature, but adults are also their companions in this matter. This, Sen argues, is the most fruitful aspect of children’s literature.
3. Complex matters of the world, such as sex, politics, philosophy, and religious questions are not the subject matter of children’s literature.
4. However, with the progress of civilization, social consciousness is presented through imparting knowledge and entertainment.
5. Children’s literature uses a language that is simple and accessible to its readers (313).

In the next section, we turn to the history of Bangla children’s literature with a focus on periodicals. Perhaps this will allow us to determine if the characteristics mentioned by Sen were indeed applicable to late nineteenth and early twentieth century vernacular literature for Bengali children.

## Children's Literature

The well-documented history of children's literature in Bengal is traced back to the activities of the missionary presses in the early years of the nineteenth century. Asha Gangopadhyay (1959) has identified three phases in the development of children's literature in the nineteenth century. These are:

1. From the publication of *Digdarshan* in 1818 till around 1851. Children's literature, in this first phase, was related to education. Missionaries, British educationists, and a number of Indian pundits and teachers played a significant role in this period. The School Book Society is an important organisation in the first phase. The various books published during this period include translations from *Aesop's Fables* (a continuation from the very first years of the nineteenth century), *Pashvabali* (1822), and a translation of *Pilgrim's Progress* by Felix Carey, among others.
2. From the establishment of the Vernacular Literary Society in 1851 to 1878. This phase saw the publication of most of Vidyasagar's works, including, in 1855, the two parts of his primer *Barnaparichay*, which paved the way for a standardisation of the Bangla language.
3. From the publication of *Balakbandhu* in 1878 to the end of the century (273–274).

It is this third and final phase which concerns us, although we shall stretch our sights slightly beyond the end of the century, to the first couple of decades of the twentieth. One of the significant aspects of this period is the quantitative and qualitative rise of juvenile periodicals, beginning with *Balakbandhu* in 1878. In this discussion, I intend to focus on two aspects of the periodicals – first, the reading culture within which they existed, and second, how they contributed to the development of the idea of children and childhood in colonial Bengal.

### *Historical Overview*

From Asha Gangopadhyay's classification of three periods of children's literature in Bengal in the nineteenth century, we can see that it begins with the publication of a periodical. With the arrival of print, which marks a departure from earlier children's literature which existed in the oral form, we can see a steady rise of the periodical, beginning with *Digdarshan*, which was edited by John Clark Marshman and published from the Serampore Baptist Mission Press. Its first issue was published in April 1818, also the year of the foundation of the Hindoo College, and that same year, Marshman began to publish *Samachar Darpan* – a Bangla weekly newspaper. Marshman himself says of the periodical:

“It was composed of historical and other notices, likely from their novelty to excite the attention of the natives and to sharpen their curiosity. In the last page, in a smaller type, some few items of political intelligence were inserted” (6).

On its title page, the periodical announced itself as a magazine for the Indian youth. The main patron and subscriber of *Digdarshan* was the School Book Society. Indeed, the early periodicals and texts, which could now be printed in India, was a part of the larger project of implementing a new system of education, initially carried out by the missionaries in various parts of Bengal. *Digdarshan*, acquired by the School Book Society, distributed these copies to schools in Calcutta.

*Digdarshan* was followed four years later by *Pashvabali* – a bilingual periodical which carried articles about the animal kingdom. *Gnyanoday* was published in 1831, the first periodical to be published and run exclusively by Bengalis. This periodical, essentially containing moral lessons for young readers, was brought out by Krishnadhan Mitra and Ramchandra Mitra.

These would roughly constitute the periodicals in the first phase of children's literature in the nineteenth century. Politically, this falls within the period of Company rule. Sibaji Bandyopadhyay has argued that it would not be wholly erroneous to ascribe to this period the epithet of 'The Era of the School Book Society' (147). Bandyopadhyay has also pointed out that the Company had realised that to maintain monopoly control over India, it would not suffice to depend only on the control of labour and raw material. At the second stage of the colonial enterprise, the aim would

be to gain control over human consciousness (107). The child's consciousness, thus, provided fertile ground. At the same time, we must remember that in the eyes of the imperialist, the colony and its inhabitants are at a nascent state of development and civilization—the colonial subject is the child—backward and ignorant. The white man's so-called burden was to lead them into the light, a light that would shine from the Empire, casting other dark shadows as it shone. As Gargi Gangopadhyay has noted, "The central and single ideology working at the heart of the school textbooks was an unquestioned superiority of Western cultures and values" (68). The periodicals, many of them serving as textbooks in this period, carry this ideology forward.

From the 1830s, we notice a steady development of periodicals in Bengal, both for children and adults. However, it is in the third and final phase of the nineteenth century that some of the major and well-known periodicals for children emerge. These periodicals, as Gangopadhyay has pointed out, mark a departure from their predecessors in terms of both tone and content. These are no longer akin to textbooks, but literature that is to be read at home, giving birth to a new reading space within the home and also contributing to the life of the child at home. More and more of these periodicals were published by Bengalis, especially the Brahmo reformists. The periodicals not only created a new leisure reading space for the child, but as Gangopadhyay has noted, they played a significant role in restructuring and developing the idea of childhood and the definition of the child. Some of the periodicals in this phase, which is inaugurated by *Balakbandhu* in 1878, include, among others, *Balak*, *Mukul*, *Sakha*, *Sathi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, *Shishu*, *Prakriti*, and *Toshini*.

*Abodh Bandhu* is an important periodical leading up to the age inaugurated by *Sakha*. It was first published in spring (Falgun) 1866 (1273 BS). The first editor was Jogendranath Ghosh, followed by the well-known Bengali poet Biharilal Chakrabarti. The periodical borrowed heavily from British texts and authors. In terms of language, it made significant strides, keeping in line with the kind of changes Vidyasagar was introducing into Bangla at this time.

In the first issue, in rather elaborate language, *Abodh Bandhu* outlines its aims and describes its target readers:

If this *Abodh Bandhu* is able to shine its light in the impenetrable darkness of superstition and ignorance that dwells in the deepest corners of the minds of boys and girls, women in the domestic space, and those of little intelligence, we shall consider it reward enough for our cares and troubles. Other than that, if this small *Abodh Bandhu* is able to attract, even for a moment, the attention of the intellectual world, it will be an achievement beyond our expectations (Mitra, 10).

Khagendranath Mitra (1999) has argued that *Abodh Bandhu* never fully became a juvenile periodical based on the kind of prose and poetry it published, which, he argues, were not suitable for young readers (10). The same sentiment is echoed by Nabendu Sen who has argued that the poems Biharilal published in this periodical were not meant for children and that the periodical was not meant exclusively for the young reader (2000, 9).

There are two points to be made here, one general, and one specific to *Abodh Bandhu*. *Abodh Bandhu*'s editorial made no claims of being a periodical exclusively for children. In fact, it specifically mentions that the periodical aims to "shine its light" not only among the youth, but also women and others who are perhaps not very intelligent. That the editor placed women and children in the same category is not new or unusual. In *Manusmriti*, the child is located near the bottom of the social pyramid. But even at the bottom, two groups are clearly demarcated – one consists of lower castes and slaves and the other of children, women, and the aged. To this second group Manu magnanimously grants the protection and indulgence of society (Kakar, 1979, 8).

The more general point has to do with the very nature of children's literature itself, especially since it is defined by adults in different times and different places across the world. Rabindranath, for one, had argued that difficult ideas and concepts can be presented to children, who may not grasp these ideas entirely, but the ideas will still leave a mark on their minds. In this context, it is worth remembering that in his recollections of his own reading habits as a child, Rabindranath talks about reading whatever he could lay his hands on, even if he did not understand them entirely. He also mentions, in fact, reading bound volumes of *Abodh Bandhu*, taken

out of his elder brother's shelves. In *Jiban Smriti*, he writes about reading a translation of *Paul et Virginie* as a child in *Abodh Bandhu*:

In my youth, I had been introduced to another periodical. It was called *Abodh Bandhu*. On many occasions I have taken the copies of this paper from Bordada's almirah and sat reading them at the southern end of his room, near the open door (82).

*Abodh Bandhu* published a range of works on science, philosophy, and history. It also published biographies, stories, poetry, and was the first juvenile periodical in Bangla to publish literary criticism. It also had a dedicated section for women authors.

In *Abodh Bandhu*, we notice the change in the naming of the periodicals. From *Digdarshan* and *Gnyanoday*—names reflective of the sombre aims of their owners—the tendency we see now is to incorporate the idea of the intended reader in the name. In *Abodh Bandhu* and *Balak Bandhu*, the purpose has changed from providing moral direction and disseminating knowledge to being a 'friend'. This chapter will return to the point about the naming of periodicals.

Like *Abodh Bandhu*, the monthly periodical *Jyotirangan* was also aimed at women and children, and was published by the Calcutta Tract Society (Bhawanipore) between 1869 and 1873. The title page of the second edition describes it as a periodical for women and children [boys and girls] (Mitra, 12–13). An introduction to the editorial states, "Many try to combine education and amusement, but it is not easy for everyone to accomplish this. [...] We have started this periodical with the aim to both *amuse and educate* [emphasis mine] our women and children" (13).

The periodical published monochrome illustrations. The artist was British. The images were in imitation of British woodcuts. It also stated that it did not want to entertain the innocent minds of their readers with stories of wars and politics. Instead, "This periodical will contain various stories, history, science, and other subjects. The main aim of the periodical is to provide moral education through amusement" (13).

This may be due in part to the fact that it was a periodical published by missionaries from the Calcutta Tract Society which had been established in 1823 to

supply books to missionary-aided vernacular schools. It is not surprising, therefore, that nationalism was not one of the primary concerns of the periodical.

*Balak Bandhu*, first published as a quarterly in 1878, has been hailed by Nabendu Sen as the first periodical in Bangla dedicated to children. But it soon went out of circulation until it was revived again in 1886 and again in 1891 when it was published as a monthly periodical (8–9). The periodical, edited by Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahmo reformer, also had a section called “Balaker Rachona” or “Compositions by Children” [although Balak refers specifically to a male child].

By the time of *Balak Bandhu*’s publication, writes Nabendu Sen, Bengali society had grown used to the feuds between Brahmoism and Christianity and Hinduism and Islam. Keshab Sen, he notes, had converted to Brahmoism long before that, in 1851. Internal conflicts eventually led to a split within the Brahmo Samaj and Keshab Sen established Naba Bidhan (10). It was around this time that *Balak Bandhu* began to be published. The periodical, then, can be read within this larger context of changing ideals and emergence of new strands of religion even while older debates raged on.

Some of the minor periodicals that followed *Balak Bandhu* were:

1. *Balak Hitaishi*, 1881, edited by Janaki Prasad Ray
2. *Atyakahini*, 1881, edited by Sidhheswar Mukhopadhyay
3. *Balika*, 1883, edited by Akhsay Kumar Gupta
4. *Balyabandhu*, 1883, edited by Reverend J. E. Penn (Sen, 12).

Other major periodicals published during this period were *Sakha*, *Balak*, *Mukul*, and *Sakha o Sathi*.

Edited by Gnanadanandini Debi, *Balak* was first published in March 1885 and continued for a year before it merged with *Bharati*, which was edited by Swarnakumari Debi.

Rabindranath Tagore writes in *Jibansmriti*, “Mejobouthakurani [referring to Gnanadanandini; literally, second sister-in-law] wanted to bring out an illustrated paper for boys. She wanted Sudhindra, Balendra and other boys of the family to

publish in this paper” (174). Although family members were given preference, *Balak* never restricted itself to family members alone. Rabindranath, who was in charge of commissioning articles for the paper and playing an active role in its publication, felt that children should be treated with respect in terms of their reading habits and their intellectual capabilities should not be underestimated. Perhaps this was a conclusion he had reached from his own bitter experiences with formal education. Therefore, *Balak* often published articles, which, at first glance, are not expected to grace the pages of a periodical for children. In his essay titled “Rabindranath o Masik Patra,” Ramananda Chattopadhyay writes that upon reading *Balak* he felt that Rabindranath had determined the level of knowledge-intellect-taste of the assumed readership with reference to his own at that age (quoted. in Introduction, 2008). The periodical *Somprakash* wrote, “Srimati Gnanadanandini Debi has taken up the task of editing a periodical for young people in simple Bengali to educate them easily about various things. [...] This periodical has published articles on subjects even adults were not aware of” (quoted in Introduction, 2008).

*Mukul* was founded and edited by the eminent Bengali Brahmo social reformer Shibnath Shastri and the first issue was published in 1895.<sup>18</sup> Shibnath Shastri was the editor of the periodical from its inception in 1895 to 1900, after which, due to illness, he relinquished the role, which was then taken up by Hemchandra Sarkar (Das, 2018).

The inception of this periodical, however, goes back a few years, when, in the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century, a few Brahmo women decided to establish a Niti Vidyalay (Moral School) in Calcutta. Those who led this effort included Hemlata Sarkar (daughter of Shibnath Shastri), Sarala Mahalanabis (daughter of Gurucharan Mahalanabish), Kumudini Khastagir (daughter of Annadacharan Khastagir), and Labanyaprabha Basu (daughter of Bhagaban Chandra Basu). Their fathers were prominent members of the Brahmo Samaj, which, in the context of Bengal in the nineteenth century, meant that they represented a more liberal and progressive community who took a stand against the rigours of Hinduism and its many practices while championing the cause of female education and other social reforms. Nabendu Sen has argued that earlier periodicals, beginning with *Balak Bandhu*, carried strong messages on religion, and often, he critically observes,

religious propaganda as well. With *Mukul*, he says, Bangla juvenile periodicals began to step out of the orbit of religious ideology – an attempt that finds culmination in a periodical like *Sandesh* in the second decade of the twentieth century (26).

Of the periodical, Shibnath Shastri writes in his autobiography:

A few years later [in 1895] they decided to publish a periodical for boys and girls. Then, I took on the role of the editor and published a monthly periodical called *Mukul*. I edited it for a few years [as quoted in *Sab Sera Mukul*, 2018].

Other than the women already mentioned, there were two other figures who played an active role in the inception of *Mukul*. One was the scientist Jagadish Chandra Bose, and other was the author (who is famous for writing for children almost exclusively) Jogindranath Sarkar. One more person was involved in this project – Ramananda Chattopadhyay, another eminent Brahmo social reformer.

One of the first things that Shastri did when he took up the mantle of the editor was to address the question of readership. In the first issue, he writes:

One more thing. It is not so that only fruits like the mango and the rose apple have buds. Love also has a bud; so does knowledge. In fact, all good things bloom from a bud. This periodical is primarily for those who themselves are buds, human buds [as quoted in *Sab Sera Mukul*, 2018].

In the second issue, he writes:

Some are under the impression that *Mukul* is intended for those within the age of eight or nine years. There are many things in *Mukul* that children of such an age will not be able to understand; in fact, they are not even supposed to understand these things. Therefore, *Mukul* is not meant for very young children. It is intended for those who are between the ages of eight/nine to seventeen/eighteen. When we write, this is the readership we have in mind [as quoted in *Sab Sera Mukul*, 2018].

The category of readership that Shastri alludes to is what the contemporary world book market would call young-adult. In defining them, Shastri avoids using the Bangla term ‘shishu’, distinguishing them quite clearly from a word carrying connotations of infancy – perhaps both of age and intellect. Furthermore, he also steers clear of the term ‘kishor’ a term used to denote the male adolescent, but often used as a blanket term to encompass all sexes. Instead, he uses, in conjunction, the term *balak-balika* – boys *and* girls.

The title of the periodical itself, following Shastri’s definition, is a reference to its intended readership. The explanation of the term ‘mukul’ as a bud—something in waiting—can then be applied to the identity of its juvenile readership. Their identity is constructed in relation to the future. It is an identity that finds meaning only when there *is* a future, even though the term actually describes their current condition. The idea of waiting and the future are inscribed in the term itself.

But about a decade before Mukul, the first issue of *Sakha* was published on 1 January, 1883. The editor was Pramada Charan Sen. Subsequently, the editorial reins were transferred from one hand to another due to several reasons. Nabendu Sen has noted that *Sakha* was an extremely popular periodical, with the number of subscribers rising from two hundred to one thousand in just one year (14). With Pramada Charan’s untimely death in 1885, Shibnath Shastri took on the role of the editor and remained so till 1886, being succeeded by Ananda Charan Sen in 1887. Nabakrishna Bhattacharya, who followed him, kept the periodical alive for another three or four years, after which it saw a gap of a few years. In 1894, Bhubanmohan Roy added *Sakha*’s name to his periodical *Sathi* and thus the periodicals were combined to form one – *Sakha o Sathi* (Mitra, 1999, 15–16).

In the history of Bangla literature for children, writes Gargi Gangopadhyay, *Sakha* is seen as the earliest secular juvenile periodical and the first children’s magazine to make a mark in a major way. With the epigraph “The Child is Father of Man” printed on the cover, she continues, *Sakha* was refreshingly different from its more didactic predecessors and signaled a change in a new direction not only in juvenile publishing, but also in the very concept of childhood.<sup>19</sup>

The first issue of the first volume states that the desire to publish such a periodical stemmed from the “lack of such a periodical in our land.” The declared aim of the periodical was the character development of children and expanding their knowledge (Mitra, 17).

The term ‘sakha’ literally translates to ‘companion’ or ‘friend’, typically male, its female counterpart being ‘sakhi.’ Names of juvenile periodicals often reflected the target readership – *Balak* and *Shishu* provide an insight into the way in which the target reader is constructed through the use of the term in the title. In other instances, they presented themselves as a friend or companion to the target reader – *Abodh Bandhu*, *Balak Bandhu*, *Sakha*, and *Sathi*. While the term ‘sakha’ alludes to a male companionship, in its editorial pages, the periodical included young girls among their target readers and inside, it also featured a section exclusively for its young female readers which typically consisted of recipes and knitting patterns – reaffirming the conflation of the woman with the domestic space and reinforcing certain stereotypical boundaries for both the male and the female juvenile reader (Gangopadhyay).<sup>20</sup>

In 1893 (1300 BS), Satish Chandra Sen edited a juvenile periodical called *Sathi* from May (the first issue) to October. Subsequently, the editorial baton was passed to Bhuban Mohan Ray whose name is more closely associated with the periodical. *Sathi* was published for a year. The cover image of the first issue portrayed a girl and a boy reading the periodical. The title page carried a poem that described the periodical and its aim. The poem begins by saying that *Sathi* is not an advisor carrying a cane, it does not scold or grind its teeth in rage. Rather, the poem continues, it is like a brother, who will hold the hands of the readers wherever they go. The poem also describes the physical appearance of the periodical – it is a slim volume, the poem says, but it will always try to preach good things for as long as it can. In the end, the poem also says, it will provide its readers with entertainment (1). At the end of the first issue, Satish Chandra Sen, the assistant editor, writes that the purpose of *Sathi* is the “overall education of boys and girls” (20). It is important to note that Sen was aware of the importance of images and says that whatever an essay or article published in the periodical fails to express through words will be supplemented with pictures. He goes on to say that collecting pictures in this country is an arduous and expensive task. In bilet [England] he says, there are several

illustrated periodicals for children which are cheaply available. However, there is a dearth of such periodicals in this unfortunate land. Sen hopes that parents will stand by them in the very important task of educating and entertaining their children and that *Sathi* may be kept alive to truly become their sathi or companion (20).

In its Kartik, Agrahayan, Magh, Falgun, and Chaitra issues (issues 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12), *Sathi* published clippings from newspapers, both English and Bangla, about the periodical. The issue published in the month of Kartik, for instance, published a snippet from *Samay* which said:

The aim of this monthly periodical is to flower the seed of sound teaching and sound traits in the tiny hearts of boys and girls. As far as we can understand, there is no doubt that it will succeed in this matter. The pictures are very nice, there are some very nice lithographs as well.

The Chaitra issue published this piece from *The Statesman* which notes that this periodical is to be read during leisure hours, and also specifies the age group of the readers as well as their gender:

An attempt is being made to provide healthy reading in Bengali for young children, by the publication of an illustrated monthly magazine entitled *Sathi* [...] It is suitable for perusal outside school hours by boys of high and middle school.

In 1894, when *Sakha* ceased its publication, Bhuban Mohan Sen, who was also related to Pramada Charan, decided to merge the two periodicals. In the first editorial, comparing the two periodicals to brothers, he expressed his joy at having been able to unite them and urged his young readers to welcome the two brothers with open arms. Even as the periodicals were imagined in gendered terms, Bhuban Mohan, in a short piece at the end of the first issue, refers to both boys and girls as the intended readers of this new periodical and outlines ‘total and complete education’ as its aim.

The fourth volume (1304 BS) of the periodical carried a letter from a young reader in its Falgun issue that is worth turning our attention to. The letter is from a

young boy named Khsitish Chandra Chakrabarti and highlights the role the periodical was intended to play in the lives of its young readers. Judging by the tone and content of the letter to the editor, one cannot help but think that it was produced in the offices of the periodical itself. The boy writes that *Sakha o Sathi* has been of immense help to him and he is writing this letter to express his gratitude for the same. He says that his elder brother made him a subscriber of *Sakha o Sathi* so he may improve his wayward ways and it was the pieces of advice he gleaned from the periodical that turned his life around. He then describes this turn-around through the metaphor of a dream:

One day, as I sat thinking, it seemed to me that I was walking alone in the darkness in a dense forest. Suddenly, I lost my way. I wept and wept, but no one showed me any kindness. Then, it was morning. In the sweet morning light, I saw a small child approaching me.

The child was beautiful. Slowly, the child said to me, “Brother, why are you scared? I will stay with you, I will show you the way, I will be your ‘Sathi’. I began to follow the child. Today, this child and I are ‘Sakha o Sathi’. And I am very happy now. *Sakha o Sathi* is the companion closest to my heart (220).

In the first couple of decades of the twentieth century, the most important juvenile periodical was undoubtedly *Sandesh*. There are several reasons why the publication of *Sandesh* can be regarded as a watershed moment in the history of juvenile periodicals in colonial Bengal. The first issue of the periodical, edited by Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, was published in 1913. The world, at this time, was already changing, and the next year would be the start of a war that would change the course of history, not only in Europe, where it was fought, but also in the colonies, which had to pay its price. With *Sandesh*, we can also see a change inaugurated in the naming of the periodicals. As the twentieth century wears on, names of periodicals change from epitomizing the target readership to more—for lack of a better term—poetic titles. *Mouchak*, *Ramdhanu*, and *Rangmashal* are examples of this turn. We must note that these periodicals, beginning with *Balak Bandhu* in 1878, were all published and edited by Bengali bhadraloks and in the case of *Balak*, bhadramahila, either Hindu or Brahmo.

Of the periodicals (other than *Sandesh*) published in the first two decades of the twentieth century, an important publication was *Shishu*. First published in April-May 1913, according to Gargi Gangopadhyay, and 1912 according to Khagendranath Mitra, this monthly periodical entitled ‘Shishu’—literally, ‘children’—was edited by Baradakanta Majumdar. Khagendranath Mitra has noted from the introduction to one of the issues that the periodical, at one point of time, had ten thousand subscribers. However, despite this popularity, it ran only for five years (151–52).

Similar to other contemporary periodicals and following the trend set by the periodicals from the last decade of the previous century, *Shishu* published on various subjects and various genres including history, science, geography, religion, and stories, poems, and even novels. It displayed deep devotion to the British Royal family and the British government. The *Ashar* 1320 BS issue number III carried a photograph of the Royal couple with the caption “Our King and Queen.” More interesting is the photograph of the governor general published in that same issue with an accompanying poem expressing relief at the official’s recovery from his illness.

This loyalty earned the periodical the patronage of the government. Khagendranath Mitra has argued that periodicals from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, right up to 1948, do not bear an imprint of social and political movements (69). What Mitra perhaps means is that there is no direct reference to such movements in the works published in these periodicals. However, articles published in these periodicals, including travelogues, do reflect the changing world around them and can be read within the broader context of nationalist development. There are, no doubt, periodicals and articles therein which praise the English for their habits, their good governance, and very often, in case of travelogues, their preservation and conservation efforts of ancient Hindu archaeological sites. In such instances, a binary is set up between the Muslim invader who supposedly destroyed the site and the British government that has sought to restore it. While both are outsiders, in this binary, the British appear to be benevolent masters. But alongside this, there are references to contemporary politics and very often, an undercurrent of nationalism or nationalist thought runs below the surface of the periodicals and the articles they published (case in point, *Balak*).

The focus in this chapter will be on *Sandesh*, since, for reasons previously mentioned, it is the last periodical to be considered in this study.

*Sandesh* marks an important transitional moment in the history of children's literature. It signified a break from previous periodicals in terms of its production. Periodicals from an earlier era, scholars have noted, were published either by individuals or religious institutions.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, *Sandesh* was the first Bangla juvenile periodical to be published from a business enterprise. This endeavour was a part of the larger entrepreneurial activities of not just Upendrakishore, but the Ray family in general.

The family magazine *Sandesh* encapsulated the entire artisanal-entrepreneurial ethos of the Rays. The family members did not simply contribute to the magazine's content; the design of the cover, the blocks for the illustrations, the layout of the magazine and, eventually, its printing were all done by the Rays themselves or under their direct supervision. Although produced with the resources of the latest technology and sold like any other magazine in the growing modern, commodified marketplace, *Sandesh* remained, at the same time, a personal statement, an object crafted from start to finish by a master artisan, his kin, and a few associates in a personal workshop (Sengoopta, 2016).

When *Sandesh* began to be published in 1913–14, its editor Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri was already a familiar and important name, not just in the domain of children's literature, but also in the field of print technology. Himself an artist, Upendrakishore was disappointed with the contemporary woodblock prints that were published in books for children. Leela Majumdar writes that there were no trained illustrators for children's books in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The woodblocks used in earlier books and periodicals lacked finesse. Most illustrations were imitations of images found in books from England. Some changes would be made to the clothes and the colour scheme and English children and their mothers would be made to look more Bengali (2). Partha Mitter has also noted that, "What really made *Sandesh* popular were its humorous illustrations. They effectively

finished off the earlier lithographs that had enjoyed a virtual monopoly” (1994, 132–33).

Sengoopta alerts us to the anonymous obituary published in *Sandesh* after Upendrakishore’s death, possibly penned by his son and the next editor of the periodical – Sukumar Ray. In it, the obituarist says:

Just compare an old copy of *Sakha* with any illustrated magazine of today. You will immediately see the immense difference in pictures. The thick lines in those old pictures are not to be seen in the beautiful illustrations of today. Perhaps you are not aware that it was Upendrakishore who first introduced the methods for printing such pictures in this country (quoted in Sengoopta, 224).

Upendrakishore believed in a truly liberal education for children – both boys and girls. He practiced this at home where he himself took on the role of a storyteller, narrating to the children of the household stories about the natural world and the universe. He also had a powerful telescope, writes Majumdar, which he used to show the children mountains on the moon and taught them to recognise the stars and the planets. He would take the children to the zoo, the museum, and the botanical gardens. He encouraged them to read both English and Bangla books and whenever a new Bangla book for children was published, he would bring it home. However, he did feel the dearth of good Bangla books for children (26–27). *Sandesh*, in a sense, was an extension of his ideas about children’s education and the way it ought to be imparted. Hence, notes Mitter, “From its inception, *Sandesh* was the most attractive Bengali publication for children. [...] Witty pictures and a unique brand of gentle humour were everywhere. Upendrakishore checked that the contents held a child’s attention by studying his own family’s reactions” (130–31).

In case of language, too, *Sandesh* made significant advances.

*Sandesh* preferred a simple, amusing and accessible language – a tradition going back to Vidyasagar’s use of a small vocabulary. Upendrakishore made reading attractive to children by using the everyday language of Calcutta. [...] At the same time, being a

supporter of education as a moral force, he was anxious that the language retain an innocent quality (122).

Upendrakishore's ideas about children and their education as well as entertainment fit into the wider scheme of Brahmo reformist activities that sought:

[...] to create a true civil society in India, where reformed, refined, and regenerate men and women would participate equally (though not identically) and the ranks of which would be constantly replenished by young people who had been inculcated with the right values from childhood, and were, therefore, likely to be morally superior to their elders (Sengoopta, 2016).

The point, therefore, was not to create miniature adults, but to actually train young people to be very different adults than their predecessors. Sengoopta further notes that while the reforming of adults was certainly a necessary and important task, reforming children was an easier one. This was because of the malleability of their minds. But it was also *more* important that they be reformed so that “the future nation would be populated by *better* adults than the colonial present” (7).

Upendrakishore knew that nothing could be forced down the throats of children and that they learnt best when they were enjoying what they had to learn. It is not the subject, argues Leela Majumdar (1993), but how that subject is presented that is more important. That does not mean, she says, that the story has to be unrealistic. In fact, she is of the opinion that irrelevant paraphernalia should not be a part of children's stories. The elements of the story must be presented in a direct, simple, lively, and conversational manner. Children have curious bent of mind by nature and are direct. Upendrakishore, she says, knew that he would have to avoid these mistakes in his works for children. A story would have to be told in a direct manner without being monotonous and one of the essential qualities of the author had to be an active imagination. The author's words should be able to invoke images and their presentation must have a sense of humour (28–29).

Modern children's authors, writes Leela Majumdar, try to explain things by using all kinds of real images. In fact, it is often argued that children's books should have more images than text. While this may be true of books for children who have

just begun to read, Majumdar argues that placing more importance on images than the text in books for children can and has had a detrimental effect on their understanding of literature. Upendrakishore was aware of this and he had different ideas about how to write a children's book. One of the things he did was to write in the colloquial language of Calcutta. This had not always been the case. In his earlier works for children, Upendrakishore used the more formal or sadhu Bangla. However, by the time he writes *Tuntunir Boi*, he is using the everyday language of the people of the city. This made the text more accessible to children, even if it did not give more importance to the images (29).

Upendrakishore genuinely believed that books for children should have the best writing, be printed on the best quality paper, and should contain the best drawings and illustrations. He believed that children's books were an extremely important part of the nation's literature. Adults usually read for entertainment or to glean some information from the text. But in case of the child, their entire thought process may be shaped by what they read and what they read contributes to the development of taste. Thus, what books for children can do is help them find pleasure and show them how to derive joy from the everyday things that surround them (39).

In those days, writes Majumdar, no one thought they could make money, let alone profit, from writing for and publishing books for children. *Sandesh* was not very expensive at all. It was printed on good quality paper and contained beautiful illustrations – water colours and images made with half-tone blocks. Most of these were done by the editor himself (40). *Sandesh* helped in creating a template for what children's books should look like and what children's literature should be. Upendrakishore took his cue from English books for children (40). Leela Majumdar is of the opinion that the contribution to the field of print technology notwithstanding, Upendrakishore's role in shaping Bangla children's literature was far more important (41).

According to Majumdar, Upendrakishore was one of the first editors to realise that no matter how good the illustrations in a children's book are, they will be of no use if they do not add something to the text. That is to say, beyond just being a skilled artist, the illustrator would also have to delve deep into the text and be able to read between the lines (43).<sup>22</sup>

Upendrakishore did not write too many books. But their importance, writes Leela Majumdar, lies in the fact that they stepped into the modern world from the experimental Victorian age without traversing a period of transition. Majumdar notes that Upendrakishore possibly found his ideology from the works of Hans Christian Andersen and other impactful storytellers (45). It is worth noting at this point that Andersen's works were translated into Bangla in the nineteenth century.<sup>23</sup>

Added to these influences, writes Majumdar, was Upendrakishore's strong faith in the value of Indian epics, folktales, and myths (45). In fact, he wrote and published abridged versions of the Indian epics for children and also published a set of stories (*Pouranik Kahini*) based on Indian mythology. This resulted in the emergence of children's literature had its own unique characteristics and strengths. While writers of an earlier era had introduced children to an adult world of morality, Upendrakishore opened the door for them to enter into a world of their own (45), and *Sandesh* played an important role in this regard.

Upendrakishore did not include overtly political pieces and while the periodical was devoted to the cause of nurturing young minds who would be the future citizens of a future nation, there was no explicitly nationalist tone that could be detected in *Sandesh*. Saroj Bandyopadhyay, the literary critic, has observed that the primary goal of *Sandesh* was "to arouse the child's mind to an awareness beyond and unpolluted by the mechanical system of a semi-capitalist society" (quoted in Sengoopta, 226).

It has been previously pointed out that the names of periodicals for children often reveal the intention of the periodical, but also indicate changing notions of the role of the periodicals in the lives of its young readers. Sengoopta writes, "The name he [Upendrakishore] chose for his magazine was *Sandesh*, a Bengali word meaning news (or information) as well as a much-loved sweet, indicating his allegiance to the Lockean programme of sweetening knowledge so as to make it palatable" (224).

In the first editorial of 1913, Upendrakishore himself wrote, "The edible *sandesh* benefits us in two ways. It is tasty and it gives us strength. This magazine will justify its name only if it possesses the same two qualities" (quoted in Sengoopta, 224).

Upon publication, *Sandesh* seems to have had an impact on the sales of another children's periodical that had been in circulation for a longer period of time. This periodical was *Mukul*. Sengoopta notes that *Mukul* "reduced its price in 1914 but to no effect: by 1915, only 400 copies were being printed—ironically, at U. Ray & Sons—and the magazine ceased publication in mid-1919" (225).

However, despite the quality of production and literary fare and its challenge to contemporary periodicals, *Sandesh* appears not to have been a profitable enterprise. Indeed, the number of times it had to halt publication over the course of the twentieth century shows and confirms Majumdar's observation that writers, illustrators, and publishers (in case of *Sandesh*'s first run, all three of which was Upendrakishore himself) of children's literature made no profits from their endeavours. Sengoopta notes that the first issue of *Sandesh* had a print run of 3500 copies. He also notes that subsequently, it only ran 3000 copies, implying that the first run had been slightly ambitious. *Sandesh* may have been popular, as the memoirs of those who read the periodical as a child testify, but priced at two annas, and with high production quality, it often ran into losses.

In the long list of juvenile periodicals published in this time period, there are some that were edited and published by [male] students – mainly young adults. Pramathanath Bishi mentions that students in Santiniketan had a number of hand-written magazines. The students were the editors, publishers, authors, and artists. The older group of students brought out a magazine named *Shanti* and *Bithika*. The middle group had two magazines – *Prabhat* and *Bagan*. The youngest group published a magazine called *Shishu* (64). Bishi also speaks of his experience of sending poems to other periodicals and hoping to see his name in print. When periodicals published from urban centres rejected his contributions, he writes, he turned his attention to the ones published from mufassil towns, hoping for more positive results.

Before concluding this section, it is worth noting some periodicals that were not published from Calcutta in this period, although their history is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss in detail. We can find at least four periodicals that were published from Dhaka –

1. *Balika*

2. *Prakriti*
3. *Toshini*
4. *Sopaan*

A periodical called *Sukhipakhi* (1888) was published from Jessore. From Chittagong, we find a periodical called *Anjali* (1898). Beyond urban centres, a periodical called *Renu* (1903) was published from Midnapore, the first of its kind to be published from this district and one that proclaimed to cater to both Hindu and Muslim children.

The selection of *Mukul*, *Balak*, *Sakha*, *Sathi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, and *Sandesh* as the main periodicals to be discussed in this thesis is not accidental. These are the periodicals that have remained in the memory of readers – both contemporary and in later years. But this memory too, is not without its own caveats. The dependence on written accounts means that a certain kind of readership is privileged when we look back ourselves in trying to understand the popularity and demographic of these periodicals in their own time. Just as Rabindranath recalls reading *Abodh Bandhu* as a child, other authors, in later years, have left accounts of periodicals they read and enjoyed as children. We turn now to these accounts.

## **Reading Habits**

In the nineteenth century, Bangla literature saw the publication of several autobiographies and memoirs by men and women and the tradition continued well into the twentieth century. Intended primarily for an adult readership, the genre does, however, have certain exceptions. As is the norm with most developments taking place in the domain of Bangla literature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Rabindranath's boyhood tales, entitled *Chhelebel*, is one of the significant exceptions. *Chhelebel* is a miniature version of his longer memoir *Jiban Smriti*. Other exceptions in the category include Punyalata Chakrabarti's *Chhelebelar Dinguli*, Leela Majumdar's *Aar Konokhane* [which grows into *Pakdondi*], and Satyajit Ray's *Jokhon Chhoto Chhilam* – all three texts were published in the second half of the twentieth century. This section will turn its attention, first, to Punyalata Chakrabarti's memoir.

Punyalata Chakrabarti, the daughter of Bidhumukhi Debi and Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, recalls in the memoir that when they were young, they did not have books for children with beautiful pictures (14). She mentions that print technology in India, at the time, was not advanced enough. When Upendrakishore's *Chheleder Ramayan* was published, the printers ruined his hand-drawn sketches. This is what made him decide to make and print good images (46).

Punyalata also talks about the books and periodicals she and her siblings read as children. In Chapter Four, she writes:

The first Bengali periodical for children was “Sakha o Sathi”... at first they were two separate papers called “Sakha” and “Sathi”, after a while they merged to form “Sakha o Sathi”. Whenever “Sakha o Sathi” arrived, Dada and others would read it eagerly. I hadn't learnt to read yet [...]. Then came “Mukul” [...] “Mukul” had lovely writing – it had such beautiful stories and poems, science made easy, travelogues, biographies, puzzles etc. With time, children's books with nice pictures also began to be published. I had heard thakuma read the *Ramayan* in a particular tune, and heard so many tales from *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* from Father. Now we had his “Chheleder Ramayan” and “Chheleder Mahabharat”, written in the language of telling a story. And we got Jogindranath Sarkar's books of stories and poems. These are the first good books in Bengali for children (23).

We turn next to Shanta Debi—Manorama Debi and Ramananda Chattopadhyay's daughter—who writes about her childhood reading habits in her memoir *Purbasmriti* as well as in the work about her father *Bharat Mukti Sadhak Ramananda Chattopadhyay o Ordhosatabdir Bangla*. In *Purbasmriti* she mentions the texts they read when they were being home-schooled in Allahabad, “After reading two volumes of ‘Barnaparichay’, we read ‘Kathamala’, ‘Bodhodoy’, ‘Akhyan Manjari’ and the three-part ‘Charu Pathh’. [...] In English, it was the norm to read *Royal Readers*. After that, the novels of Scott – *Ivanhoe*, *Talisman* etc” (10).

She mentions that as children they were encouraged to read literature. Her uncle would read out bits from the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* to them.

She writes that even in Allahabad, where they were living at the time, several Bangla newspapers and periodicals came to their home. This was only natural, considering Ramananda was an editor himself. The papers and periodicals she mentions include *Hitabadi*, *Bangabasi*, *Sanjibani* (25), *Bamabodhini*, *Bharati*, and *Bandhab* (33). She also mentions *Mukul* which was their favourite (26). She writes, “When we were young, we really adored Upendrakishore Rauchaudhuri’s story about Ghnyaghasur in *Mukul*” (61).

In the work about her father, Shanta Debi dedicates an entire section on *Mukul*. Like Punyalata, Shanta Debi also laments the lack of good quality pictures in books for children and mentions that this was something that had bothered Ramananda Chattopadhyay. He really liked *Sulabh Samachar*, which was printed on coloured paper during Pujo when he was a child. He also liked a book on plants by Dr. Jadunath Mukhopadhyay which contained illustrations by Troilokyonath Deb (94). Ramananda, in fact, was the one who printed pictures in *Barna Parichay* with every alphabet. These books became so popular, writes Shanta Debi, that they sold more than two lakh copies in seventeen or eighteen years (94).

She goes on to write:

There was a dearth of juvenile periodicals as well. In 1292, ‘Balak’ first appeared alone, then in the lap of ‘Bharati’. Swarnakumari Debi and Rabindranath were the main enthusiasts in this task. ‘Balak’ died prematurely. Around this time, in 1885, Pramadacharan Sen, the editor of the juvenile periodical ‘Sakha’ passed away. Soon after, a periodical called ‘Sakha o Sathi’ came into being. There were probably no good periodicals for children in 1895. [...] In 1895, mainly through the efforts of him [Ramananda] and Acharya Jagadish Chandra, an illustrated children’s periodical called ‘Mukul’ began to be published. These enthusiastic young men convinced Shibnath Shastri to be the editor. The assistant editors were Jogindranath Sarkar and Labanyaprabha Basu (94).

It is interesting to note that in Shanta Debi's version of how *Mukul* came into being, the role of the women is overlooked. She does go on to mention the Niti Vidyalaya in the same paragraph, but only mentions Labanyaprabha Basu as the assistant editor without making note of any of the other women who are mentioned by Shibnath Shastri as the catalysts for the birth of this periodical.

In this same work, she also mentions the books they had in the library of their house on South Road circa 1899–1900.<sup>24</sup> The list includes volumes of Shakespeare's works published by Macmillan, Ramesh Chunder Dutt's translation of the Rig-Veda, volumes of English poets, Chamber's Encyclopedia, Century Dictionary, Webster's Dictionary and others. These last works also attracted the attention of children (101). Shanta Debi writes, "The arrival of books from Calcutta was a matter of joy. Whether or not they could sink their teeth into them, children were also very happy when the books arrived. [...] There were bound volumes of old 'Sakha o Sathi'. The new periodical 'Mukul' was running successfully at the time. She also recalls learning songs and reading the poetry of Rabindranath, especially the songs of *Kalmrigaya* [The Ill-Fated Hunt] and the long poem 'Nodee' [River] (101–02).

The reference to 'Nodee' returns again in Parimal Goswami's memoir *Smriti Chitran*. He writes:

'Nodee' was first published as a book [...] I used to like this poem very much. The river, having emerged from the glacial cave, is making its way towards the ocean. Our house was near the river Padma. The poem 'Nodee' would give rise to so many imaginations in my mind (15).

Parimal Goswami recalls that his father subscribed to several contemporary periodicals such as *Janmabhumi*, *Sakhi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, *Bangadarshan*, *Bangabhasha*, *Samalochoni*, *Sadhana*, *Pradip*, *Bharati* and others. He also mentions a missionary paper called *Mahila Bandhab* (14).

Images form a part of Goswami's memories as well. He writes:

I still remember the way the periodicals looked. The initial development of my knowledge took place in an environment of a multitude of books. Books and pictures. I remember a colour print arriving from bilet in a thick, cylindrical packet – paintings by Landseer. Once, a few big, colour paintings by Ravi Verma arrived from Bombay. These pictures and English books for children or pictures in folders with sample pages from the Encyclopedia Britannica almost drove me mad (14).

Goswami was enrolled at a school in Potazia in Pabna district of Bengal (now in Bangladesh). There, his classmate and friend Phoni was a subscriber of *Mukul*. Subsequently, Goswami also subscribed to the periodical (31). After that, he also subscribed to *Prakriti* and then *Shishu*. He writes:

*Prakriti* was my favourite. In it, I found a sort of uniqueness in O. P. Ghosh's painting of children that I did not find in any other Bengali artiste. [...] A painting of mine had been published in *Prakriti*. As far as I recall, it was in *Prakriti* that I saw a photo of the Mohunbagan team of 1911 and felt very happy and proud (31).

In Potazia, I also subscribed to two other periodicals. One was Boy's Own Paper, published from London, the other was the bi-weekly paper Indian Daily News, published from Calcutta (49).

*Mukul*, *Prakriti*, *Shishu* were regulars. A missionary periodical called 'Balak', priced at six annas per year, was one of my favourites (49).

We might recall here that Sukumar Ray had sent pictures and photographs to English juvenile periodicals such as *The Boy's Own Paper* and *Chums* and even won prizes for them.<sup>25</sup>

Swarnakumari Debi and Janakinath Ghoshal's daughter Sarala Debi writes that her taste in literature was developed by her maternal uncle Rabindranath. She recalls a day in Darjeeling when the poet explained Robert Browning's poem "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon'" (2007, 31). Of course, Sarala Debi was born to illustrious parents and grew up in an environment, like Shanta Debi and Punyalata Chakrabarti, which

encouraged female education beyond merely completing a syllabus or curriculum. Encouraged by her mother, Sarala sent a poem to *Sakha* and two of her works were later published in *Balak*. She also recalls reading Kipling as a young girl and feeling quite enraged (76–77).

The two Indian epics—*Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*—feature predominantly in many of these memoirs as tales heard from elders in the family, especially grandmothers. We have already seen this in case of both Punyalata and Shanta Debi, and now we look at a few other texts that also mention the epics as part of their literary universe beyond the printed word.

In her memoir *Amar Khata*, Indira Debi, writing about her education, mentions both *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* in the list of books she read (45).

Edited by Somendranath Basu, *Smritikatha* is a collection of three memoirs by three women of which one is “Pitri Smriti” by Soudamini Debi. In it, she mentions that their education began by taking lessons from a Vaishnavi and eventually they read up to the *Ramayana* (10)

Prasannamoyee Debi was the daughter of a Deputy Magistrate. A precocious child, her first book of poems was published when she was only twelve years old. She was widowed at a very young age and her father, Durgadas Chaudhuri, encouraged her to read and write and arranged for her to receive an education. She writes, “We had grown so used to hearing the glorious tales of Ramayana and Mahabharata from our aunts that we did not have to learn them later on” (28).

Abanindranath Tagore’s daughter Uma Debi, in her memoir about her father, mentions that the artist was a great story-teller. Not only did he narrate to them the stories that would eventually become *Khiner Putul* and *Shakuntala*, he also narrated tales from the epics (21–23).

Indubala Majumdar writes in her memoir *Ek Aparichita Briddhar Dinlipi*:

I liked reading so much that if I did not read the entire day I felt like I had been fasting. From monthly periodicals to all sorts of books,

the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*, I read everything, irrespective of whether I understood them (17).

Indubala belongs to a slightly later generation – born probably in the early twentieth century. From this same period, we have three more authors – Smriti Mitra, Leela Majumdar, and Buddhadeb Basu.

Smriti Mitra writes in her memoir *Baro Barir Chhoto Smriti*:

Ever since I was a child, I was interested in reading and listening to stories. So, I had read almost all the works of the famous authors of that age like Jogindranath Sarkar, Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, and Sukumar Ray. After that, I also became familiar with the works of Hemendranath Roy and Sunirmal Basu. Shetal dada made me a subscriber of the young-adult periodical *Mouchak*. Later, I also became the subscriber of *Bhai-Bon* edited by Prabhatkiran Basu (84).

In the first part of Buddhadeb Basu’s memoir, entitled *Amar Chhelebel*, the author recalls the literary universe to which he was introduced mainly by his grandfather, who would read out stories of Sherlock Holmes and parts of Shakespeare’s plays (11). The periodical that captured his young imagination, he says, was *Sandesh*, but Basu is writing of a time after Sukumar Ray’s death, when the periodical was no longer being published. This gap left behind by *Sandesh*, he says, was filled by *Mouchak* (42).

“...my entire childhood was centered around that one small monthly periodical,” writes Leela Majumdar in *Paakdondi* (22). The “small monthly periodical” she is referring to is *Sandesh* and Majumdar describes the moment they first laid eyes on the first issue of this juvenile periodical.

*Poila baishakh* [the first day of the Bengali calendar] [...] Suddenly *gyathhamoshai* came up, smiling. In his hands was the first issue of *Sandesh*. How lovely was its cover! A brother and a sister, their mouth filled with *sandesh* and *Sandesh* in their hands. As far as I recall, this was the cover of the first issue (21).

In the second half of the twentieth century, Leela Majumdar and Buddhadeb Basu both went on to carve out a space for themselves in the world of Bangla literature. Leela Majumdar dedicated her life to the cause of children's literature, writing predominantly for a young audience, following in the footsteps of her illustrious ancestors.

### **Before Print: Nursery Rhymes**

The publication of *Thhakurmar Jhuli* in 1907 has been marked by Sibaji Bandyopadhyay as a crucial moment, not only in the domain of Bangla juvenile literature in print, but in the discourse of nationalism in Bengal. Drawing attention to Rabindranath Tagore's Introduction to Majumdar's compilation of Bangla fairytales, Bandyopadhyay alerts us to the larger projects of recovery and reconstruction of an indigenous consciousness – processes that turned to rural Bengal and found in it the repository of true Bengali identity (65–68). When Rabindranath hails *Thhakurmar Jhuli* as purely 'swadeshi,' the political connotations of the word cannot be overlooked. Finally, in the form of *Thhakurmar Jhuli*, we are the producers. No longer must we borrow tales from the imperialist. The real makers of the stories, however, are erased in the journey from oral narration to print. They remain nameless in the history of children's literature.

“Throughout the world,” writes John Stephens, “literature for children originates with retelling and adapting the familiar stories of a culture” (2009, 91). Majumdar's *Thhakurmar Jhuli* certainly fits this description. We must remember also, as Grenby has noted, that if children's literature in print is a transition of nursery tales and rhymes orally transmitted across generations, then when it reaches the public world of print, it does so in the hands of men, and not the women who would have been the predominant storytellers in the private world of the home (2009, 11).

In her study of nineteenth-century German fairy tales, Gabi R. Kathofer notes that the period was one of enormous social and political change. The century witnessed the end of a feudal system, the rise of the middle class and the birth of the modern European nation states. This radical transformation, she argues following Niklas Luhmann, created a vacuum of values and this vacuum was then filled by “the

invention of culture” in its modern sense. Luhmann writes, “Initially, culture is just the duplication of all artefacts, including texts. Besides their immediate meaning of usage, they acquire a second meaning, as documents of culture” (94).

Kathofer further notes that the invention of culture also modified the understanding of the nation and nation acquired the meaning of “Kulturnation” – “a community defined by common cultural traditions and roots” (95).

In a time of great socio-political transformation, the fairy tale, argues Kathofer, provided a “fixed template” that could express both “stasis and crisis, stability and transition, home and foreignness, harmony and conflict” (100).

The template is simple and familiar. It begins at home—then the hero(es) must venture out of the home to battle a crisis (foreign)—and finally the status quo is restored and everyone lives happily ever after. Kathofer has argued that the way in which the home is imagined in fairy tales relies on the idea of foreignness. This is because the reconstruction of home or the resolution of the crisis at the end of the fairy tale is a result of “the process of comparison, rejection and exclusion of the other” (110).

This analysis of nineteenth-century German fairy tales lends itself to an analysis of the same in Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century where the development of nationalism, the emergence of a new middle class, and the growth of print technology also creates a vacuum of values which is then filled by a new ‘culture’ and we can see the process of ‘duplication of artefacts’ in literature where stories from myths, legends, and epics find themselves adapted into children’s literature – a fertile ground for such adaptation as the site of the battleground between the old and the new, the past and the future. The collection and compilation of Bangla folk and nursery rhymes and fairy tales by the likes of Dakhsinaranjan Mitra Majumdar, Jogindranath Sarkar, and Rabindranath Tagore, among others, is a part of this process, which essentially is a process of identity formation (of the home and the self) and an attempt to define one’s community through its shared cultural roots. Kathofer has seen in such attempts, albeit in a different context, “the Romantic desire to archive oral folk traditions as representation of one’s cultural origins...” (96).

What Majumdar did for fairytales, Jogindranath Sarkar did for nursery rhymes. His collection of Bangla rhymes—*Khukumonir Chhora*—was first published in 1899. Rabindranath is present in this context too. He was the main force of encouragement behind Sarkar’s endeavour. Rabindranath himself has undertaken a similar project. However, it was Jogindranath Sarkar’s *Khukumonir Chhora* that was the first such collection in print. Ramendrasundar Trivedi, in his an introduction to the first edition (1899), hails the nursery rhymes as being ‘Bengali’ and containing images of Bengali domestic life.<sup>26</sup> Trivedi further points out that since these are rhymes for children, they do not bother with the rules and rigours of poetry for adults. Verse is free, as is the mind of the child, and neither wants to be fettered. Children, he points out, are very much alike everywhere in the world, irrespective of the colour of their skin. Similarities thus exist between Bengali and British nursery rhymes.

Such similarities are described by Abanindranath Tagore in his essay ‘Chhelebhulano Chhora’. This discussion will use Abanindranath and Rabindranath’s essays of the same name as a point of entry into a discussion on the ways in which rural Bengal is represented in these nursery rhymes. In both their discussions, images form a central theme.

“Silent like an image – no sound, but echoes in the heart – that is our Bangladesh” writes Abanindranath (2011, 47). He begins with broad brushstrokes – painting an image of a typical Bengal village with its river, field, a temple, groves, huts, and, curiously, the house of the landlord. Abanindranath identifies two seemingly contradictory elements in these rhymes. On the one hand, it is knit closely to reality through the small events of the everyday that find their way into these rhymes. But on the other hand, the rhymes are “completely free, residing in the unreal domain of imagination” (64).

Quoting extensively, Abanindranath analyses several aspects of these rhymes. He identifies the presence of history in the lullaby – “chhele ghumolo, para jurolo, borgi elo deshe, bulbulite dhan kheyechhe, khajna debo kische” [The boy is asleep/ the neighbourhood falls silent/the bulbuli have eaten the paddy/how do we pay taxes] (49) or the turn towards the city in search of jobs in the rhyme – “Dada go dada shahare jao, tin taka kore maine pao” [O brother, to town go thee/ and draw a salary of rupees three (50). Yet, images form the crux of his discussion. He creates an interesting list –

comparing rhymes with a style of art. Here are two examples from the list – “Cloud effect of Western Art: Uttarete megh korechhe, Goru jachhe ure/ Peyada byata pag bnedechhe soru dhaner chnire” [clouds gather in the north/the cow is in flight/ the guard has tied is turban/ as if it’s fine flat rice] and “Sunset Landscape: Akash jure megh korechhe, sujyi gelo pate/ Khuku gechhe jol ante Padma dighir ghatē” [the sky is cloudy/ the sun has set/ Khuku has gone to fetch water/ to the Padma river-ghat] (52).

Never is a complete image of rural Bengal created in a single rhyme—but in these fragmented images strewn across the rhymes, Abanindranath finds a whole—a complete image of Bengali life.

Rabindranath too notices the fragmented nature of these images, and also notices in them a dream-like sequencing – one image follows another without any apparent connection, geographical locales change from one line to the next. But he also finds a class of pictures that allude to a complete image of Bengal home/social life (185). One of the rhymes he cites in this context depicts the excitement of the arrival of the son-in-law among the women of the household, “Ulu ulu madarer phul, bor ashchhe koto dur/ Bor ashchhe Baghnapara, boro bou go ranna chora [...]” [*Ulu ulu madar* bloom, how far away is the groom/ In Baghnapara is the man, O *boro bou* heat the pan] (185).

There is a conflation in the discussion of these rhymes of the rural with the ‘natural’ – not just nature, but something that extends to a way of life. Trivedi, in his introduction, writes about the artificial literature produced under artificial education. Rural Bengal with its natural beauty is the repository of Truth and the true ‘home’ of the Bengali. Thus, it is to this truth to which one has to turn when the home is under someone else’s control.

### **The Marketplace**

This chapter has traced both the history of the idea of children and childhood and children’s literature in Bengal.

In understanding how the ideas of child and childhood took shape in Bengal, this chapter has first looked at the pre-colonial era to find an early categorisation of the phases of childhood. In the articles from nineteenth century periodicals, we find a different kind of categorisation. However, the traditions associated with the various stages of childhood would presumably have still been prevalent during this time.

Within the colonial context, the transformation of the idea of childhood and the figure of the child in the imagination of the colonised occurs as a response to imperial rule. This chapter has noted how children were imagined, first, in the future tense – as the future generation, adults in the making, buds waiting to bloom. However, this is not to conclude that children were seen as miniature adults. Rather, from the material discussed in this chapter, it appears as though children and childhood held a distinct place in the imagination of both pre-colonial and colonial Bengal and these ideas were naturally affected by social, political, and economic changes that Bengal went through, especially as a result of its contact with the West.

The most significant of these changes were taking place in the nineteenth century with the emergence of leisure reading and a leisure reading space at home. From personal accounts, this chapter has tried to reconstruct the reading habits of those who grew up in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is interesting to note that girls and boys (who belonged to the privileged upper class and caste) have similar experiences when it comes to their reading habits. Many of them mention listening to stories by elders in the family.

In Punyalata Chakrabarti, Shanta Debi, and Leela Majumdar's accounts in particular, we also find articulations of what defines and constitutes children's literature. It is worth noting, of course, that all three grew up to write for children.

Images form an important part of the children's books and periodicals. Both Punyalata and Shanta Debi lament the dearth of good quality pictures in children's books in Bangla and hail the achievements of their fathers in addressing and filling this void. Their laments and Parimal Goswami's fascination with images leads us to ask a more technical questions about juvenile periodicals – how were they made attractive to children as commodities? And an even more technical question, how

much money would an adult have to spend to make their children subscribers to these periodicals?

*Shishu*, first published in 1913, the same year as *Sandesh*, had an annual subscription of one rupee fifty paise. The annual subscription for *Mukul* was one rupee. Published around twenty years before *Shishu*, the periodical *Sathi* had an annual subscription of 14 annas including postal charges. The price of each issue was five annas. *Sakha* charged one rupee annually, perhaps slightly expensive compared to its contemporaries, but nevertheless very popular. The price would depend on the quality of the paper and also on the use of colour plates.<sup>27</sup>

Periodicals that could not use colour plates also printed a number of pictures – pencil sketches, woodcuts, and linocuts. Travel narratives were very often accompanied by images. The improvements in quality of print and the inclusion of images, coloured or otherwise, contribute the value of the periodical as a commodity that would appear to be attractive and engaging to the young reader. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words.

The rise and proliferation of Bangla juvenile and [adult] periodicals coincided, as it did in Britain, with the advances in print technology. Upendrakishore and Sukumar Ray's contribution in this field requires no reiteration.

Perhaps, to a certain degree, the new commodity did sell. I venture this tentative argument based on two conclusions have derived from available evidence. First, the evidence of the autobiographies and memoirs where we can see the recurrence of certain periodicals – *Sakha*, *Sakha o Sathi*, *Balak*, *Mukul*, and, later, *Sandesh*. Parimal Goswami's account is particularly interesting because he is not in an urban setting and none of his family members are on the editorial boards of the periodicals. Moreover, these are the also periodicals that have found themselves being reprinted in edited volumes – either as facsimiles or collections of their best prose and poetry. *Sandesh*, of course, has undergone several revivals and is still in publication.

This chapter has tried to locate these periodicals as read texts rather than relics of the past and situate them within a larger literary universe that is not limited to printed books. Together, these periodicals constitute what Buddhadev Basu in his essay on children's literature has called the 'Golden' Age of children's literature in

Bengal which he distinguishes as a period in which those who wrote for children did so exclusively. I have tried to touch briefly upon how the periodicals contribute to the discourse of childhood and children's literature – two categories that constantly seem to avoid strict definitions. I would like to conclude with Pramatha Chaudhuri's remark on the seemingly undefinable category of children's literature:

Shishu Sahitya bole kono podarther ostitwo nei, ebong thakte pare na. Kenona shishu-pochhondo sahitya shishu byatito opor keu rochona korite pare na, aar shishura samajer upor ar je otyachar I koruk na keno, sahitya rochona kore na. [446]

[There is no such thing as children's literature, and it cannot exist either. Because no one but children can compose literature that they like, and no matter what other torture children unleash upon society, they do not compose literature.]

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45670/on-the-seashore>

<sup>2</sup> It is possible, in this context, to think of Plato's *Republic* and the education of the future Guardians or the mirror books for princes, of which Machiavelli's text is a prime example. The *Mahabharata* contains passages describing the training and education of young princes. Ancient Buddhist seats of learning such as Nalanda and Vikramshila are other examples, as are the endeavours of Mughal emperors. The Brahminical social structure also had its system of education which is briefly discussed in this chapter. In many of the instances mentioned here, access to education was marked by privilege, most often of gender, but, also, in certain instances, by class and caste. See, for instance, Hartmut Scharfe, *Education in Ancient India*, 2002; and Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century*, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Phillippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, translated by Robert Baldick, 1962.

<sup>4</sup> See Kimberley Reynolds, *Children's Literature: From the fin de siècle to the new millennium*, 2012, and *Children's Literature: A Very Short Introduction*, 2011; M. O Grenby, "The Origins of Children's Literature", 2009; and John Stephens, "Retelling Stories across Time and Cultures", 2009; In a specifically Indian context, see, among other works, Gargi Gangopadhyay's unpublished thesis and Supriya Goswami, *Colonial India in Children's Literature*, 2012. Sibaji Bandyopadhyay's work *Gopal Rakhal Dvanda Samas* is particularly important in studying Bengali juvenile literature within the larger political fabric of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

<sup>5</sup> Subhadipa Dutta's essay focuses on the idea of play in the mangal kabyas and shows its gendered nature. As an extension, it is possible to study the development of the idea of games and sports—as a physical activity, as well as toys—in forming gender roles and expectations. Developing the physical prowess of the Bengali man came to be linked eventually to the project of nationalism, tied to the idea of the 'effeminate' Bengali espoused by the British rulers. The School of Cultural Texts and Records at Jadavpur University carried out a project of documentation which can be found here: <http://www.granthsouthasia.in/physical-cultures-of-bengal.html>. Also see, Abhijit Gupta, "The Culture of the Body in Colonial Bengal: The

---

Case of Gobor Guha”, 2012; Indira Chowdhury, *The Frail Hero and Virile History*, 1998; and Sikata Banerjee, *Make Me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India*, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytical Study of Childhood and Society in India*, 2004. This thesis will not be using psychoanalysis as a theoretical tool.

<sup>7</sup> In Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, a play that has lent itself organically to postcolonial reworkings and adaptations, Prospero, the exiled Duke of Milan, and his daughter, Miranda, are self-fashioned and self-proclaimed teachers to the “savage” Caliban, the son of Sycorax the witch, and one of the occupants of the island to which Prospero arrives. As the play progresses, it becomes clear that Caliban – the monster, the slave, a “thing of darkness” as Prospero refers to him, is not willing to submit to this education, which he realises is a tool of subjugation. In Act I Scene ii, he says, “You taught me language, and/my profit on’t/Is I know how to curse.”

<sup>8</sup> From Tagore’s essay ‘Chhelebhualno Chhora-1’ in *Lokshahitya*. The translation here is by Suchismita Sen, “Tagore’s “Lokashahitya”: The Oral Tradition in Bengali Children’s Rhymes”, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> This experience of stepping out of the house for education and travel would be an urban, middle-class experience, that too, limited to the more ‘progressive’ sections of society, which in Bengal of this period would be the Brahmo sect.

<sup>10</sup> Interesting to note in this context that young girls would often affectionately be called ‘Maa’ by the adults around her.

<sup>11</sup> Coventry Patmore will forever be remembered for coining the phrase, even if his poem remains unread.

<sup>12</sup> Birendra Chattopadhyay, “Amar Santan Jak Protyoho Noroke”, *Nirbacita Kabita*, 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Annada refers quite literally to anna [awn-no] – which could be translated as both food and rice. Bengal was a land ravaged by famines, and the imagery of Annada becomes especially significant within this context. Ishwari Patani’s plea, then, can be read as literal, with the shadow of scarcity looming underneath.

<sup>14</sup> Dutta cites the example of Lakhinder’s childhood as described by Vijay Gupta in *Manasamangal* c. late 15<sup>th</sup> century (176).

---

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation*, 2001; Geraldine Forbes, *Women in Modern India*, 1996; Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, 1993; Swapna. M. Banerjee, *Men, Women, Domesticity: Articulating Middle Class Identity in Colonial Bengal*, 2004; Meredith Borthwick, *The Changing Role of Women in Bengal 1844–1905*, 1984; Chitra Deb, *Antahpurur Atmakatha*, 1984; and Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid, editors, *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*, 1990, among others.

<sup>16</sup> Friedrich Froebel – German pedagogue, founder of the kindergarten. One of his earlier works, *Education of Man* (published in 1826), lays the groundwork for the idea of the kindergarten system. The Editor’s Preface to a 1907 edition of the text says of Froebel and his methods, “His great word is *inner connection*. There must be an inner connection between the pupil’s mind and the objects which he studies, and this shall determine what to study. [...] Froebel’s aim is to educate the child through his self-activity.”

<sup>17</sup> The essay was first published in 1952.

<sup>18</sup> The information about the periodical, including Shastri’s quotes, have been collected from the Preface to *Sab Sera Mukul*, a miscellaneous collection of articles published in *Mukul* between 1895 and 1900. The collection was published by the Sadharan Barhma Samaj in 2018.

<sup>19</sup> <http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/Sakha.php>

<sup>20</sup> <http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/Sakha.php>

<sup>21</sup> Khagendranath Mitra was possibly the first to point this out and the argument has subsequently been repeated by others, including Provas Ranjan Dey and Chhandak Sengoopta.

<sup>22</sup> Olive Senior, the Jamaican poet and author, who also writes books for children, said in her keynote address titled “Should Literature Be Political”:

“Every author has a world view which reflects a political stance and shapes what we do, even unconsciously. For example, as a child, I grew up in a world where I never saw myself or the people around me visually portrayed in the children’s books I read (though I took great pleasure in reading them).”

As a writer of children’s books, Olive Senior says, she wants to write books that children across the globe can read and enjoy, but she is concerned that the images in the text should express a multicultural world.

---

<sup>23</sup> For more on the project of translation in nineteenth century Bengal, see Chandrani Chatterjee, *Translation Reconsidered: Culture, Genre, and the “Colonial Encounter” in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, 2010; See also, Sinjini Sarkar, “Hans Andersen o Unish Shataker Bangla Onubaad”, 2019; and Himalay Jana, “*A Highway through the Wood: Translation as a Colonial Venture in Nineteenth-Century Bengal*”, 2020.

<sup>24</sup> See, Abhijit Gupta, “Household Words: An Account of the Bengali Family Library”, 2011; and Priya Joshi, *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India*, 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Partha Mitter has argued that *Sandesh* was “distantly modelled on *Boy’s Own Paper*”, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India 1850–1922*, 1994.

<sup>26</sup> I am using here the edition published by National Book Agency in 2006 where page numbers for the Introduction are not available.

<sup>27</sup> While many of these periodicals have been digitised, it is no longer possible to recover reliable or accurate data regarding the number of subscribers nor their demography.

## Chapter 2

### The Culture(s) of Travel in Bengal

*Where to go this time? Some gallant-hearted friends said – go to your home in the country, reform the village. But I admit with great embarrassment that like many other great tasks, this too is beyond me. [...] I have become addicted to travel.*

– Rajshekhar Basu,  
“Kochi Sangsad” (116)

Contrary to the popular and stereotypical image of the ghor-kuno Bengali—one who wants to idle time away in the little corner of their own home—literary evidence dating as far back as the fifteenth century at least suggests that the Bengali was an itinerant traveller and, more recent evidence would suggest, also an itinerant tourist.<sup>1</sup> As was the case with travellers in other parts of the world, travellers from Bengal were travelling long before they thought of documenting their experience of travelling.

The present work is concerned with only the kinds of travel writing that documents the real journey of the traveller/author to a real destination.<sup>2</sup> However, for the purpose of tracing the socio-cultural history of travel in Bengal, this chapter will look at literary representations of travel in early modern Bangla literature, primarily the mangalkabyas, and specifically the *Manasa Mangal* and *Chandi Mangal*.

This chapter will also discuss in brief the medieval saint Chaitanya who played a key role in spreading the Bhakti movement across India through his travels. It is in his biographies, scholars have pointed out, that we find early glimpses of documentation of travel.

While Chaitanya may be one of the first travellers to have his journeys written down, it was still someone else's metaphorical pen that performed the task. The earliest known instance of Bangla travel writing is Bijayram Sen's verse-travelogue and secondary mangalkabya – *Tirtha Mangal*. The text was revived and printed in the second decade of the twentieth century and as such, can then be placed within the larger context of an attempt of the nationalist project to revive a glorious (predominantly and usually Hindu) past as a challenge to the aggression of the intellectual and cultural hegemony of colonial rule. This thesis also explores how, within this project, travel was beginning to play a significant role from the last decade of the nineteenth century.

There is little to no doubt, however, that the colonial encounter changed travel, and by extension, travel writing in the Indian context in general and the context of Bengal and Bangla travel writing in particular. Most significant of these encounters was, of course, the introduction and subsequent development of the railways in India. The railways introduced a new technology of travel that brought with it a new way of seeing the country – a task that was now quicker, less expensive, and more accessible. In subsequent chapters, this thesis will explore how the railway journey gave birth to new literary landscapes in travel writing.

This chapter will discuss the development of the technology of transport and its implications in the context of the development of travel and travel writing. The Brahminical patriarchy in Bengal had been resistant to the idea of crossing the kalapani—the black waters of the ocean—because, they feared, strict caste hierarchies based on notions of touch and contact could not be maintained on board.<sup>3</sup> Several tracts published in the nineteenth century debated and discussed this matter, with some forbidding sea voyage altogether.<sup>4</sup> The ship was, by this time, a familiar mode of transport. The train, however, was a novelty and a technological wonder. Perhaps for these reasons, it did not produce a severe backlash.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, we find examples of pamphlets and leaflets in Bangla instructing its readers in the proper conduct of railway travel. However, the space of the train itself was also marked by lines of difference based quite literally on gender, class, and race by demarcating compartments.

Notwithstanding these discriminatory lines, the railways contributed significantly to the rise and boom of tourism as an industry in Bengal and aided in the emergence of the Bengali as a tourist. The ‘family tour’ was a significant part of this new kind of travel. Children began to become a more visible part of both travel and travel writing – as travellers, travelling companions, readers, and even authors. This chapter intends also to focus on the figure of the child within the context of the culture of travel in Bengal and Bangla travel writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

### **Travels in Pre-Colonial Bengal**

The mangalkabyas have been briefly introduced in the previous chapter. Here, I pay attention to the elements of travel in some of the mangalkabya texts in order to understand the pre-colonial culture of travel in Bengal, and we focus particularly on two mangalkabya texts – *Manasamangal* and *Chandimangal*.

The well-known story of *Manasamangal* could be divided into two parts. The first is the story of Chand Saudagar—a tradesman—a devout worshipper of Shiva, who refuses to offer obeisance to Manasa – the Goddess of Snakes. Angered by his disrespect, Manasa sinks his seven dingas, or ships, on which he had set sail for trade. The wrath of the Goddess also haunts Chand’s family life. His son Lakhindar dies on his wedding night, bitten by a snake, despite their attempt to save him by placing the newlyweds in an iron room. Subsequently, Behula, Lakhindar’s bride, embarks on a journey on a banana-leaf raft to ask the Goddess to bring him back to life.

As is the case with mangalkabyas, which were sung in front of an audience, there are several poets who composed *Manasamangal* over a number of centuries. Here, I refer to Asutosh Bhattacharya’s compilation of twenty-two poets of *Manasamangal* in tracing the two descriptions of travel – that of Chand Saudagar in the first part for trade and of Behula in the second. The references here are from the versions composed by Bipradas Pipilai in the fifteenth century and Ketakadas Khemananda in the seventeenth.

David Curley has noted that “In mangal-kavya we hear about realistic features of Bengal’s open frontiers and its riverine and village landscapes as human characters travel in the course of their stories” (2011, 189). We find this in the description of the travels of Chand Saudagar in Bipradas Piplai’s version of the tale.

In a section entitled ‘Banijya Jatra’ [Voyage for Trade], Bipradas describes the seven ships on which Chand will sail before moving on to tracing the path down the river:

Rajghat Rameshwar bahiya eray  
Dharmakhan bahiya Ajay nadee pay  
Ujani bahiya ashi hoilo uponeeto  
Shiba node sarai bahil tworanwito  
Ujani Katwa bahi bohe Indraghat-e  
Indracharan puje shei nadee tote” (147).

The route begins with rowing by Rajghat and Rameshwar before reaching the river Ajay. They row upstream until they reach the river Shiba, which takes them to Indraghat. Here, writes the poet, they stop to offer prayers to Lord Indra.

Lakhindar’s ships then sail past Phulia, Saptagram, and Tribeni, where he performs the rites of a pilgrimage before reaching Kumarhat (147–48).

The other places he sails past or stops at include Paikpara, Bhadreshwar, Ichhapur, Khardah, Bakibajar, Chnapdani, Konnagar, Kamarhati, Ariyadoho, Chitpur among others (149–50). Bipradas also describes the ships entering the sea in the section entitled ‘Samudrabakkhse’, or, ‘In the lap of the Sea’. He writes:

Tahar melan dinga sangame prabeshe.  
Tirthakarya koilo raja por[om] horishe  
Dariya probesh hoilo Chandor madhukar  
Nishidishi bahe osthoprohor sotwor (153).

[Once they enter the confluence, the king performs pilgrimage rituals again. His ships then enter the sea with the oarsmen rowing as fast as they can all day and night].

The world, at this time, was connected through the water. In a riverine land such as Bengal, waterways played an important part in the lives of its people. Scholarly work on trade and commerce in early modern Bengal has pointed to evidence that proves the prosperity of the land in this period.<sup>6</sup>

From Bipradas' account, we can see that trade and pilgrimage were not mutually exclusive modes of travel. Chand has set sail for trade, yet when he comes upon a noted site of pilgrimage, he stops to perform religious rites. In the absence of a physical map created by travellers, these early modern texts also provide an idea of riverine routes in Bengal and beyond and become important documents in charting Bengal's geography, revealing an awareness of the lay of the land and its waters.

Similarly, in *Chandimangal*, composed in the late sixteenth century, Curley notes the presence of a more or less accurate list "of towns and landings which its merchants passed on the Ajay, Bhagirathi and Adi Ganga rivers" (189).<sup>7</sup>

The *Chandimangal* poem contains two primary narratives – one of Kalketu the hunter and the other, that of Dhanapati the merchant. Dhanapati's story follows a similar theme as that of Chand Saudagar and his initial dismissal of a chthonic goddess. Both men are worshippers of Shiva and refuse to acknowledge the importance of Manasa and Chandi respectively. It is the women in these narratives who are primarily associated with the worship of divine figures such as Manasa and Chandi. This would have been reflective of the social reality of Bengal and the story of Chand and Dhanapati finally accepting the importance of these goddesses could be read as a metaphor for the actual assimilation of these deities into the Hindu Brahminical tradition. The anxiety around the conversion of lower caste Hindus to Islam in this period could be read as a contributing factor to this need for assimilation.

Regarding the descriptions of travel in the mangalkabyas, Curley further notes that, "most stories of journeys also describe fabulous places and people" (189).

In *Chandimangal*, on his way to Sinhala along the southern coast of India, Dhanapati and his crew come across 'abysses' or dahas in the ocean, Curley notes, inhabited by "giant predators which the merchants must escape, leeches the size of logs, for example, or else giants, conches and cowries, animals which the merchants profitably can trap and turn to a profit" (191).

Behula, in *Manasamangal*, “clearly travelled to the south,” notes Curley, [but] “the fabulous destination of her journey where she met Manasa and the gods cannot be identified with any real locality. On the way she passed ‘bends’ in the river which were literal forests, and others which were inhabited without proper government, and she met a series of dangerous figures, including a tigress, and several strangers who tried to persuade and compel her to abandon her purpose” (189). In Khemananda’s version, even before she begins her journey, Sanaka, Lakhindar’s mother, expresses her skepticism regarding the same – “Shishu, juba, abala jahar poti more/bidhaba hoiya she thake nijo ghore” [Child, youngsters, and the distressed woman whose husband dies/stays at home as a widow]. Why, then, asks Sanaka, does she want to sail down a river? (207)

Jayati Gupta notes that “although a folk-narrative and a mythological story,” *Manasamangal* focuses on “a woman’s grit to venture out of the antahpur to encounter challenges and conflicts that are social and religious in nature” (8, 2020). In fact, Gupta further points out, ballads from early modern Bengal often feature lower-caste women travelling from one rural setting to another, “Usually these women were performers or entertainers travelling with groups that changed places every day or were detained in zamindar households for a few days. Such travelling women enjoyed a degree of freedom in their near-nomadic life...” (8).

### **Chaitanya and his Travels**

The travels of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the fifteenth century Vaishnavite saint, who is considered to have played a pioneering role in the first 'renaissance' of Bengal, can be read within the larger, pan-Indian tradition of the wandering sadhu or ascetic (Chaudhuri, 2019, 162). I use the term 'wandering' consciously here, preferring this, and not travel, as the literal translation of the Bangla word 'bhraman', keeping in mind its etymology. The word bhraman derives from the Sanskrit word 'bhram' which means misconception or confusion. Bhraman, thus, literally referred to aimless wanderings rather than travelling with a purpose. For the latter, the more appropriate word would be 'jatra'. However, as Sinha (2012) has noted, while Brahminical society advised against such wanderings for fear of 'contamination', tirtha bhraman, or

pilgrimage for the purposes of accruing virtues was a sanctioned form of travel. Chaitanya's travels—pilgrimages he undertook as well as his own journey to preach his religious ideals—can be read within this larger context (287). Sinha further notes that the followers of Chaitanya incorporated a list of places associated with the saint into the wider, pan-Indian corpus of pre-existing Vaishnavite pilgrim sites. Chaitanya's travels can also be divided into his visits to these sites as well as his own journey to various places in order to preach his religious ideals. The condition of the wandering or travelling ascetic, Chaudhuri has noted, is also reflective of the pilgrimage as “a way of re-enacting the metaphysics of the travelling human soul in motion towards enlightenment” (161).

Chaitanya, however, did not compose a travelogue, nor do the eight *shlokas* that have come down to us as markers of his literary output contain descriptions of his travels. Thus, we must depend upon his biographers, especially Krishnadas Kabiraj, in tracing the map of Chaitanya's travels across India (Giri, 2022). These accounts, Giri has argued, help to reveal the true impact of the Bhakti movement in India (121).

Before becoming an ascetic, Chaitanya had travelled to Gaya to offer pinda for his deceased father five or six years after his death. Here, he meets with and is inducted into the Gopal Mantra by Ishwar Puri – a moment that has been pointed out as being significant in the initiation of his life as an ascetic (122).

After he becomes an ascetic, Chaitanya travelled to several parts of Bengal and India. One of his more significant travels was to the southern parts of India. These travels are not mentioned by Brindaban Das in his *Chaitanya Bhagvat*. Of the description of Chaitanya's travels in the Tirtha Khanda of Jayananda's *Chaitanya Mangal*, Giri quotes Bimanbihari Majumdar and Sukhomay Mukhopadhyay's conclusion, “Tirtha Khanda – it is very short and covers only five sections. It gives a very vague and unrealistic description of the pilgrimage of Chaitanya” (123–24). Thus, concludes Giri, it is to Krishnadas Kabiraj we must turn in finding the accounts of these travels (123). The many places Chaitanya visited in the dakhsinatya or the southern states include Vidyanagar on the banks of the Godavari, Tripadi (now Tirupati), Shiv Kanchi (now Kanjivaram), Rishav hills (now Palnihil), Kanyakumari, and the Shringeri mathh founded by Shankaracharya at the confluence of the Tapti and Payoshni rivers, before finally returning to Vidyanagar to conclude his travels.

## The Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage is one of the oldest forms of travel in India and also one of the first to be rendered into a theme for travel writing.<sup>8</sup> The pilgrimage could be undertaken by an individual or in a group, especially for those who could not afford to travel alone. The affluent could organise a pilgrimage for their family members alone, while the less fortunate would travel in a motley crew from a single or cluster of neighbouring villages. Religious texts did not sanction women to undertake a pilgrimage unless they were widows.

A brief biography of Bijayram Sen, the earliest known author of a Bangla travelogue, can be constructed from Nagendranath Basu's introduction to the text and Bijayram's own words. Sen's composition was later edited and published by Nagendranath Basu from Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in 1915 (1322 BS). The same year, he also edited and published Jadunath Sarbadhikari's travelogue *Tirtha Bhraman*, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Bijayram lived in Bhajanghat, which was near Nonagunj on the banks of the river Ichhamoti. He was a Vaidya by caste and a physician by profession.

Bijayram Sen's secondary mangalkabya, *Tirthamangal*, was composed in the second half of the eighteenth century. In the introduction to a reprint of the text, Baridbaran Ghosh has noted that it was recited by Bijayram Sen in front of his patron and fellow traveller Raja Krishnachandra Ghoshal in 1770 AD, seven years after they had undertaken the journey to Kashi (2009).

In his brief introduction, Ghosh has further noted the importance of *Tirthamangal* as a historical document. He notes that the historian Kalikinkar Dutta, in *Alivardy and His Times*, had written about *Tirtha Mangal* that "It is a contemporary book of travels in Bengali of much historical value [...] (he) has given very valuable descriptions of the routes followed and the places visited by them. The descriptions

being accurate and of much importance for a student of history” (quoted in Introduction).<sup>9</sup>

One of the reasons for this historical importance is the political context of the poem. Krishnachandra’s journey to Kashi via Bihar was not solely for the purpose of a pilgrimage, but also to forge political alliances and secure information about neighbouring states and their rulers. The text mentions his meetings with several local rulers and administrators and alludes to this intention when the poet writes, “*Ek kaaje tin kaaj/ Koroho noukar saaj/Pujo giya Kashir thhakur*” [The job will be three in one/ Let’s set sail/To Kashi we will go and pray] .

The poem also gives detailed accounts of trade along the course of their journey, including a description of the now-extinct art of ship-building in Bengal.

The travelogue is divided into two parts—Biharbhraman and Kashibhraman—and also charts the journey back to Murshidabad via the waterway. The first section describes the route from Jalangi to places in Bihar, covering locations such as Bateshwar, Kahalgram, Khagra, Shibgunj, Jangira, Kodalighata, Sitakunda, Munger, Barh, Baikunthapur, Fatua, Patna, Hilsa, Ichhlampur, Gaya, Sarsara, and Jahanabad. The second section mentions Manikarnika, Panchatirtha, Gopigunj, Jhuchi, Vindhyabasini, Mrijapur, Chandralhar, Chunar, Ramnagar, Gazipur, Bhojpur, Serpur, Danapur. The return journey covers Patna, Sitakund, and Sultangunj and ends in Murshidabad.

In the section on ‘Kashi Mahatmya’, Bijayram begins, “Kashi that is made of stone is beautiful to look at. Two-storey houses look scary. Finding no space, people build their house upwards. One may fall to the ground while craning their neck to look at such houses” (91). An earlier section entitled ‘Rajmahal Barnana’, or ‘Description of Rajmahal’ also mentions the two-storeyed houses and the author’s sense of wonder at witnessing such buildings (50). In describing Patna, Bijayram invokes both the auditory and the olfactory sense experience in his ‘direct observation: “excrement and piss, the din and commotion of the narrow alleys that are Patna city’s shame” (Curley, 2020). In speaking of the form of the poem, which he compares to both vernacular and Persian traditions of writing about travel, Curley

notes, following the text's first editor Nagendranath Basu (1916) that other than describing the pilgrimage itself:

*Tirthamangal* had another, quite different purpose as well. [...] The poem describes the 'condition of the country and of the mind of the people'. He [Basu] noted that to clarify the text as 'history and sociology' of the period between Mughal and British rule, he had provided editorial notes, identifying all the important places and people that it mentions (86)<sup>10</sup>.

Nagendranath Basu, the first Bengali to compile an encyclopaedia, was an archaeologist and an important member of the group of men who set up the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in the late nineteenth century. In that sense, he belongs to the group represented by Rajendralal Mitra and historians such as Rakhaldash Bandyopadhyay and Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, among others, despite the differences he shared with many of them in their ideas on history. Other than *Tirthamangal*, he also edited several publications of Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, including Jaynarayan Ghoshal's *Kashi Parikrama* (Jaynarayan Ghoshal was the son of Krishnachandra) in 1906 and Jadunath Sarbadhikari's *Tirtha Bharam* in 1915. He also edited the publication of two eighteenth century manuscripts of Narahari Chakrabarti, a well-known Vaishnavite poet.<sup>11</sup> In introducing one of these texts, *Braja Parikrama*, Basu compares the Bangla verse narrative to Mandeville's work, saying, "One who has found pleasure in reading Mandeville's *Jerusalem* will no doubt be similarly amazed when reading this *Braja Parikrama*" and that "this text would be of interest to the devout, the linguist, the historian, and the geographer" (Preface, 1312 BS).

The Parishad's project of reprinting these texts may be read within the context of creating a specifically Bengali and generally Hindu self in the aftermath of the partition of Bengal in 1905 as part of the development of a peculiarly Bengali nationalism which also uses revivalism as its tool. Nagendranath Basu's editorial interventions, though scoffed at by many of his contemporaries, identify these texts as sources of history as well as geography, a distinction that was blurred even in nineteenth and early twentieth century travel writing for children and adults alike. The travelogue from this period targeting a juvenile audience would also use the text and

the act of travel as a lesson in both these subjects, as we shall see in the discussion of Abala Basu's travelogues, for instance.

In the Introduction to *Tirthamangal*, Nagendranath makes no distinction between *desh bhraman* and *tirtha bhraman*, saying that in the olden times, men would embark on *desh bhraman* for religious reasons.

This has been a part of Indian tradition since ancient times – we have seen that in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. We have seen sacred tales of pilgrim travels recorded in the ancient scriptures of Buddhists and Jains. [...] Read the biographies of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his followers in Bangla – our very own mother language – and you shall find many examples of *desh bhraman* or *tirtha bhraman*.<sup>12</sup>

The merger of travelling the country with travelling to sites of pilgrimage is clear in *Tirthamangal*, as has been discussed, but perhaps finds further clarity in Jadunath Sarbadhikari's *Tirtha Bhraman*, the title of which is indicative of this synthesis.

Jadunath Sarbadhikari, the author of *Tirtha Bhraman* was born in 1805 in the village of Radhanagar in Hooghly, the same village where Rammohun Roy was also born.<sup>13</sup> Not much is known about his growing up years. He married twice and from his own accounts, it appears that he led an unhappy family life. He also suffered greatly from physical ailments. Both may have been contributing factors in his decision to embark on a pilgrimage. He travelled for four years and upon his return, committed his life to social welfare. He passed away in 1871 (77–81).

The places that Sarbadhikari's pilgrimage takes him include Kashi, Prayag, Kanpur, Lucknow, Ayodhya, Ajmer, Haridwar, Srinagar, Delhi, Agra, and Allahabad, to name a few. *Tirtha Bhraman* is the culmination of four years of travels across the northern part of India and also includes the author's journey to the treacherous terrains of the Himalayas.

Jadunath embarked upon his journey across India in 1853, a year before the railways were established in Bengal and travelled for four years. Even when the option became available, Jadunath, however, could not afford to travel by rail and therefore opted for the more traditional mode of walking. However, like Bijayram Sen, his text can be located at an important juncture in the history of India. His journey begins at the same time as the first railway lines are being laid and ends in 1857 – the year of the Great Revolt. He dedicates a long section of his travelogue to a description of being stuck in Kashi as a result of the events of 1857.

Studying Bijayram Sen and Jadunath Sarbadhikari's texts together in her essay, Kumkum Chatterjee (1999) notes that although the works are separated by almost a century, the latter resembles the former in its essence. That is to say, unlike the travel narratives composed by Bengali bhadraloks (and bhadramahilas) who envisioned India or Bharatbarsha as a "historical-national identity", Jadunath and his predecessor Bijayram, as pilgrims, "saw themselves as travelling through a historically and culturally neutral landscape in which places assumed significance primarily because of their status as sacred sites" (199–200).

Nagendranath Basu writes (1322 BS) that this work contains not just the glorious tales of pilgrim sites but also images of contemporary social life, human nature, customs and traditions, brief histories, and fables.

While it may be true that the travelogues by Bengalis in the later decades of the nineteenth century were part of the nationalist project in a more pronounced way, as Chatterjee notes, it is also important to note that Sarbadhikari's apparently neutral landscape is inflected with the privilege of the majority. In Ayodhyay, for instance, Sarbadhikari imagines the kingdom of Rama. He writes:

Shri Ramchandra's capital in Ayodhya has turned into a forest.  
There are dwellings here and there and statues of Ram and Sita.  
There is a fair on Ramnavami. [...] The place where the throne of the  
king used to be is high like an island. [...] There are remnants of  
dwellings in the form of stones and bricks (113).

There are other similarities between Bijayram and Jadunath's works that have led scholars to read them together. As opposed to 'bhraman' in the sense of

wandering without a clear purpose, these travelogues follow an itinerary. Most importantly, the authors usually never fail to mention the people that populate the places to which they travel and are able to, perhaps unintentionally, document the heterogenous identities of the people of this land.

As Jayati Gupta (2021) has pointed out:

...in Vijayram Sen and Jadunath Sarbadhikari we encounter narrative itineraries creating selective visual fields describing contours of the landscape, invariably referring to the people who populate regions, distinctive objects that attract attention, historical sites that bear testimony to bygone days, customs and codes that define identities (24).<sup>14</sup>

### **Secular Travel**

Ishwar Chandra Gupta, the Bengali poet and journalist, was born in the district of Nadia in 1812 and died in 1859. Gupta came to Calcutta in 1852 where he learnt English and Sanskrit. In 1831, he began to edit *Sambad Prabhakar*, a weekly magazine of which Jogendranath Tagore (in an edited version of the text his name appears as Jogendramohan) was the patron. The first issue of the magazine was published in January, and stopped just after a year when the patron passed away. It was revived as a tri-weekly in August 1836 and continued to be published till June 1839. In July that year, it began to be published as a daily newspaper. Gupta also edited several other magazines including *Sambadsadhuranjan* and *Sambadtratnabali*.

Ishwar Chandra Gupta is best known as a poet. He composed his poetry in a colloquial language and his poems were “concerned more with the material world than the divine, laced with an earthly humour” (Chakrabarti and Chakrabarti, 209). They marked the beginning of a new era in Bangla poetry.

Besides poetry, Ishwar Chandra also composed prose pieces of which an example are the letters published in *Sambad Prabhakar*.<sup>15</sup> The letters, published under the title “Bhramonkari Bondhur Patra” [Letters of a Travelling Friend] or

“Bhramonkari Bondhu Hoite Prapto” [Received from a Travelling Friend], did not carry Ishwar Chandra’s name. While he was travelling, the editorial mantle was taken up by the co-editor Shyamacharan Bandyopadhyay. Wherever Ishwar Chandra went, he sent descriptions of his travels by post to *Sambad Prabhakar*, addressing the editor and referring to himself as the “travelling friend”. The letters are from a few months of 1854 (1261 BS). In the editorial from the first of Chaitra 1264 BS (1854), he reveals himself to be the author of these letters.

With the prayer of resolving my physical ailments and the desire to see new lands, I set forth from Kolkata on the seventh day of *agrahayan* on a boat and travelled down the river for a few months [...] The more new things I saw, the more new joys I felt. The simple fluid movement of the rivers, their waves, their playfulness, their very simple and very crooked stream – the fantastic radiance of the mountains – the soft beauty of gardens – the beautiful scenes of the Sunderbans. So many cities, so many villages, so many markets, so many towns, so many temples, so many pilgrimages, so many groves, so many lakes – so many such things I have seen and been filled with happiness, my eyes have fulfilled their purpose (101).

While the editorial is effusive in its praise for the beauty of natural landscapes, Ishwar Chandra’s epistolary travelogue focused less on natural beauty and more on the social and economic condition of the people of the places he visited. He also observes the nature of the British administration in these parts of Bengal. It is also worth noting that a ‘change of air’ was already being prescribed by physicians for the improvement of health. Later in the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, one finds several instances of entire families relocating to the ‘west’ for a few months for the same reason. This will be discussed in more detail in another section of this chapter.

Several sources suggest that at least seven or eight years prior to 1854, Ishwar Chandra travelled to various places and wrote travelogues which had also been published in *Sambad Prabhakar* (Dutta, 2018). While these issues have not all been retrieved, the editors of the recent edition of Gupta’s work have provided excerpts and extracts dated 1854 in their introduction.

In one letter, Gupta writes, “Dear Editor! I am travelling by boat for a change of air as suggested by the physician to improve my health. Having left Kolkata, the more I travel northwards, the stronger I feel...” (quoted in Introduction, Dutta), and in another, “Two years ago, I had come to Rajshahi on my travels. I recently revisited the place and found great differences from the first visit” (quoted in Introduction, Dutta).

Among the places that Ishwar Chandra Gupta travelled to in 1854 were Rajshahi, Pabna, Faridpur, Bikrampur, Rajnagar, Narayangunj, Dhaka, Shambhunath, Sitakunda, Chattagram, Tripura, Barishal, Sunderban, Taki, Bangaon, Shibnibas, Hnaskhali, and Ranaghat.

When he visits a new place, Ishwar Chandra provides a very brief account of the route they took to get there. For instance, when he travels to Faridpur, he writes, “Sailing on a boat from the Borokuti *ghat* of Rajshahi, we headed towards Pabna and in the evening, entered Ichhamoti, leaving Padma behind” (15). Or, “Having departed from Chattagram last Sunday, twenty-third of *magh* at seven o’clock, we crossed Barobakunda, Sitakunda, Chandranath etc. and arrived at Coomilla on Friday, the twenty-eighth of *magh* a little after three in the afternoon” (64). This is all he usually has to say about the journey itself. As previously mentioned, Ishwar Chandra is more interested in the condition of the places and the people who inhabit them. In the editorial dated the first of Chaitra, he writes that in the letters already published, he has described the history—new and old—of certain districts and cities and that more descriptions will follow in the letters to come (102). He says also, and this is worth noting, that he himself has tried, with the help of his friends away from home, to collect as much of these histories as possible and encourages his fellow countrymen who are enthusiastic about cultivating knowledge and working for the betterment of the country to do the same and send it to him (102). From the same editorial, we learn that the travelogues were popular. Ishwar Chandra says that the circulation of the paper and the number of subscribers have both increased since the travelogues began to be published, possibly because of an interest in the subject matter. Thus, he says, the publication of the travelogues has been beneficial to the newspaper itself (102).

Ishwar Chandra provides detailed accounts of some of the districts and cities he visits, with notes on their geographical boundaries, the number of parganas, their

trade, agriculture, climate, food habits, education, social (especially wedding) customs, and natural resources, among other things. He mentions and praises the restoration work being carried out by the British administration at the ancient site of Gour, the erstwhile capital of Bengal. However, he does not spend much time eulogising Bengal's glorious past or rue its present condition – a trope we shall find recurring in many travel narratives written later in the century.

There are two interesting nuggets of information he provides that are worth mentioning. One is the building of the Grand Trunk Road. Ishwar Chandra writes, “Recently, a wide and huge road is being constructed from Dhaka to Arakan which is called the ‘Grand Trunk Road’. This road will go through the houses and gardens of many subjects. For this road, the government will have to spend around 800000 *mudra*. This will be very beneficial for the people” (53).

And about Bakhargunj, he writes, “I saw in many parts of this Bakhargunj district that women row boats. They are skilled at maneuvering the hull, rowing the oars, and pulling the ropes. I saw that men and women were equally skilled in matters of rowing a boat” (90).

A few important points emerge from a reading of Ishwar Chandra Gupta's travelogues. The first is his identity as a traveller and the use of that identity in the title under which the letters were published. This is certainly a move away from the more familiar identity of the pilgrim and is also an early instance of secular travel from and largely within Bengal.

The epistolary form is also of interest. The epistle and the diary are two modes often used by those who penned travelogues in the second half of the nineteenth century. Usually defined as more domestic forms of writing, the diary and the epistle were generally considered to be forms suitable for female authors. However, in case of the travelogue, this gendered understanding of the form is kept aside. Both the epistle and the journal or the diary create a sense of authenticity and immediacy. In *Bhramonkari Bondhur Patra*, we see an early example of the same. The epistolary form of travel writing will be discussed in greater detail in the section of Rabindranath Tagore's *Chhinnapatrabali* – letters written to his niece Indira Devi during his many travels.

Lastly, the element of documentation and recording of history is an important aspect of Ishwar Chandra's travels and travelogues. While there is no direct reference to the work of documentation undertaken by the British, nor any direct challenge to the same, by virtue of its existence in print, Ishwar Chandra's travels become a part of the process of writing and recording one's own history – a project that travel writing will continue to engage with as the century progresses. This aspect of travel writing, especially in the context of writing for children, will be further elaborated upon in the following chapters.

### **The Railways and the Emergence of Tourism**

“With their far-reaching material presence and manifold consequences,” writes Sumit Sarkar, “the railways constitute the most impressive and enduring monument to British rule in India. [...] The railways, in fact, seemed to have stood at the organizational and technical core of those of the economic, political, social, and ecological transformations that produced modern India” (178).

Built for the benefit of the Empire, the railways seem to have had a contradictory effect on Indian nationalism. On the one hand, by increasing the speed of mobility and thereby connectedness, the railways did become, to a certain extent, an inadvertent carrier of nationalism. But this nationalism was consolidating itself under the larger umbrella of a particular religious identity. Later, Gandhi would argue that the railways, by connecting large parts of the country, actually showed people how

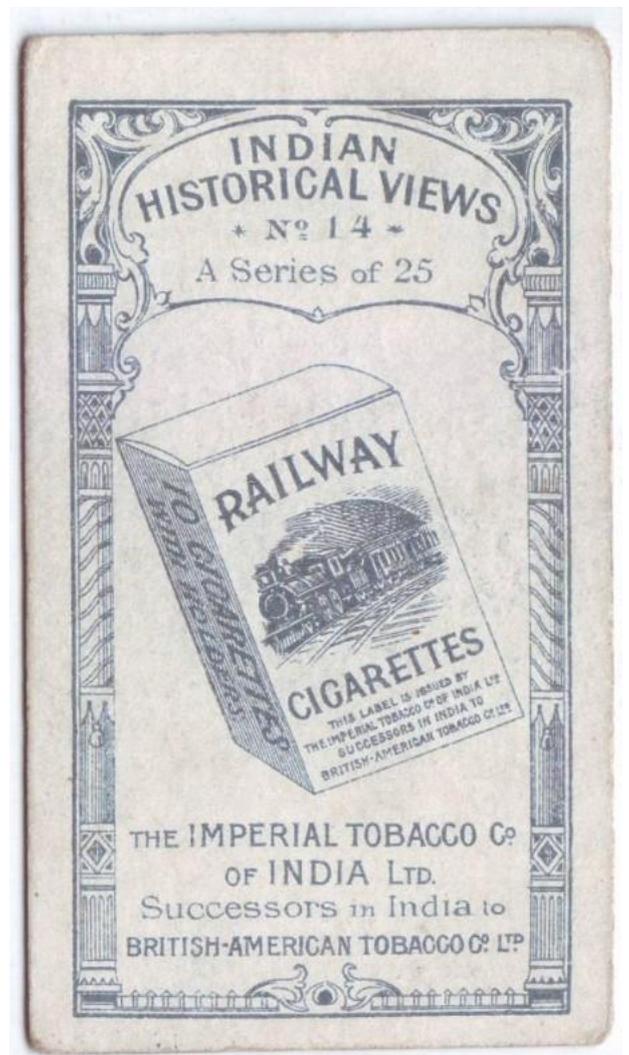


Figure 2.1

different the country was in terms of language, culture, geography, and other factors, and, therefore, was a hindrance to the path of unity.<sup>16</sup>

The development of the railways across India resulted in an increase in non-pilgrimage travels, and the proliferation of travel writing. The railways itself found a place in the literary and cultural imagination of the Bengali, as is exemplified by its representation in fiction, and the number of tracts that were published about railway travel since its emergence and development.<sup>17</sup>

The next sections will provide a brief history of the development of the railways in Bengal and trace its relationship to travel and travel writing. It will also look at early literary allusions to the railways in Bangla texts.

### *Bengalis and the Railways*

The first Bengali to travel on a train was, apparently, Rammohun Roy. A news article from 1831 informs us that Rammohun travelled on a train from Liverpool to Manchester – a journey of one hour and twenty minutes covering a distance of approximately forty-eight kilometres. The article suggests that Rammohun had been fascinated by the train as well as his subsequent journey. This was twenty-two years before the railways came to India (Ghosh,78, 1991).

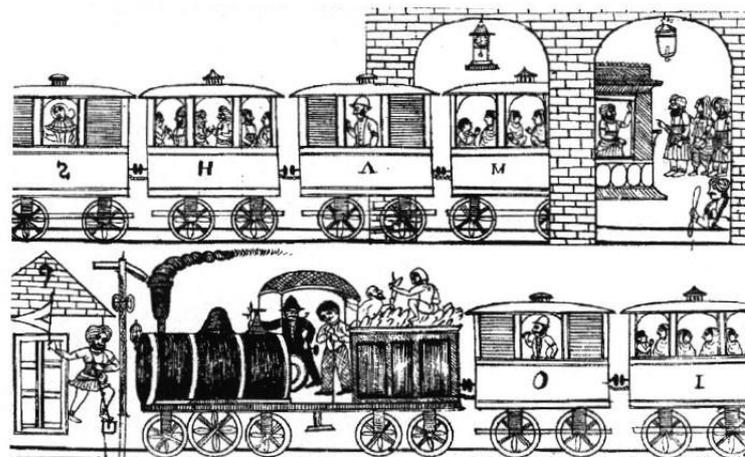


Figure 2.2

The railways came to Bengal on 15 August 1854. A year before that, in 1853, the first train in India ran between Bombay and Thane – a 35-mile-long stretch. It is

not within the scope nor the intention of this thesis to dive deep into the economic impact of the railways in India, though it will discuss the contribution of the railways in the development of the industry of tourism. Sumit Sarkar has noted that “the implications of the railways, both far-reaching and ambiguous, extended far beyond the economy. Along with improved roads, steamships, and the post and telegraph service [...], the late-colonial revolution in communications was motivated in large part by, and contributed enormously to, the tightening of the British politico-material controls” (184). The previous section mentions Gandhi’s reservations against the railways, but as Sarkar has noted, upon his return from South Africa, “he spent a year deliberately travelling third class across the country to experience the woes of the ordinary Indians” (184).

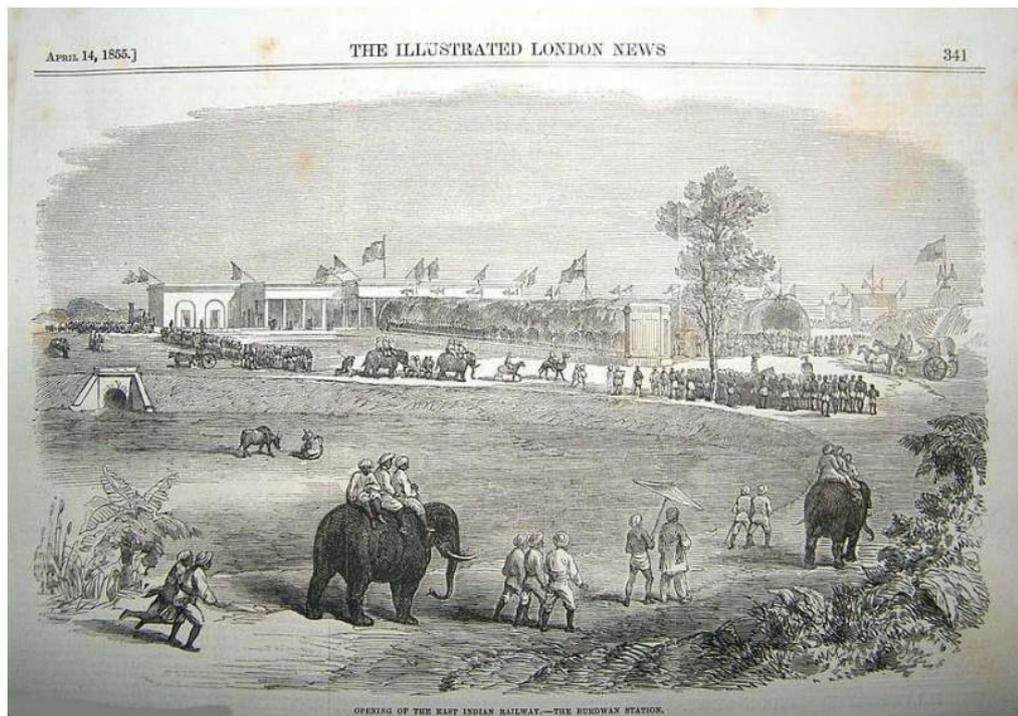


Figure 2.3

In the early years of the railways in particular, wealthy members of Bengali society identified it as a profitable enterprise and made investments. The more well-known name associated with this enterprise is that of Dwarkanath Tagore. He, in fact, was one of the first Indians to be associated with the railways in India. In a letter to G. Crayen in 1843, Dwarkanath writes that he was travelling to Allahabad on a steamer, but only managed to get as far as Bhagalpur due to the strong currents of the river and was forced to return to Calcutta. Towards the end of the letter, Dwarkanath

laments the absence of railways in India and says that travelling in this part of the world is neither easy nor simple (Ghosh, 78).



Figure 2.4

When Ronald McDonald Stephenson, presented his first report regarding the establishment of the East India Railway Company, of which he would go on to become the first Managing Director, Dwarkanath had offered to bear one-third of the cost of laying the tracks from Calcutta to the coal-mine areas of erstwhile Burdwan. However, he later withdrew his support. Subsequently, it was primarily through his backing that the Bengal Great Western Railway emerged as a rival to the East India Railway Company. Both companies were registered in London in 1844 (79).

Ghosh puts forth two reasons for Dwarkanath withdrawing his support from Stephenson's plans. One, the directors of Stephenson's proposed company were based in London. The company backed by Dwarkanath would be under the control of the business community of Calcutta while not harming the interests of the British rulers. Second, Stephenson wanted the first lines to be laid between Calcutta and Burdwan. While Dwarkanath had initially agreed to this project, he later decided it would be more beneficial for the Calcutta-based business enterprises if the tracks were laid

between Calcutta and Rajmahal – till the port of the India General Steam Navigation Company. These enterprises were looking to the railways as complementing the pre-existing steamer (81–82).

The lesser-known name associated with the railways in Bengal is that of Ramgati Mukhopadhyay, who was an engineer of the Tirhut State Railways and had a railway engine named after him. This engine, built in France, was first brought circa 1862–63 to run on the four feet gauge line on the Nalhati–Azimgunj track. It is unclear exactly why and when the engine was named after him (81–82).

Ramgati was also associated with the first Indian rail company set up entirely by Indians and entirely with Indian capital. This was the Bengal Provincial Railway Company, set up by Amritlal Roy, the editor of the magazine *Hope*. Ramgati was one of the directors of the company. The chief engineer was a Bengali—a man named Annada Prasad Ray— and the assistant engineer and the overseer were also Bengali – Ramkrishna Mukhopadhyay and Nalin Behari Ghosh, respectively (82).

*The Railway Times* published the following piece on 26 July, 1890:

The Bengal Provincial Railway Company, the first purely native railway company yet organised, is about to construct a narrow-gauge line, 30 miles in length, from Tarakeswar to Tribeni Ghat, as a feeder to the East India Railway. Several leading natives have joined the board of directors (112).

The following piece was published in *The Calcutta Review* in 1895:

An interesting event took place at Tarakeswar, on the 7<sup>th</sup> April, when His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal opened the Tarakeswar-Mugra Branch railway, the first work of the kind carried out with native capital and through native agency. The execution of the undertaking, by the Bengal Provincial Railway Company, has been largely due to the efforts of Raja Peary Mohun Mukherjee, who represented the Company at the opening ceremony; and the line, which it is hoped will be the forerunner of other works

of a similar kind, has been engineered by Babu Ram Gati Banerjea (211–12).

Ramgati is also mentioned in two Bangla publications. These are from his pre-Bengal Provincial Railway days. *Bharat Sanskarak* (1874) mentions that Ramgati was the manager of the Nalhati and Matla rail. The railway authorities had decided to shut this rail down because they were incurring losses. However, their fortunes turned once Ramgati was made the manager. This article states, “Their manager Ramgati Mukhopadhyay is no less than the European employees when it comes to intellect and skill” (quoted in Sar, 2012).

*Sadharani* (1874) also published an article about the Matla rail stating that it has become financially stable ever since Babu Ramgati Mukhopadhyay has taken on its responsibility (71).

#### *Literature and the Railways*

In *Jibansmriti*, when Rabindranath writes about the first time he travelled with his father, he mentions Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay’s warnings prior to the journey, quoted here because of Tagore’s inimitable description, but also as a rare example of what a child felt when boarding a railway carriage for the first time:

Satya had told us that unless one was very adroit, getting onto a railway carriage was a dangerous affair — one tiny slip could result in a horrible accident. Then, when the train begins to move, one has to employ all the energy one has to be able to sit tight. Otherwise, a violent jerk can throw a man off to who knows where. Upon reaching the station, there were butterflies in my stomach. But boarding the carriage was so easy that I thought the worst was yet to come. But then the carriage began to move without a hitch and I was even a little disappointed by the complete lack of danger. (440).

The railways also introduced a new way of seeing, which, in turn, created a new landscape, in which, as Victor Hugo writes in a letter dated 22 August 1837,

“The flowers by the side of the road are no longer flowers but flecks, or rather streaks, of red or white; there are no longer any points, everything becomes a streak...” (quoted in Schivelbusch, 1986). This will be elaborated upon in the discussion on Rabindranath’s *Chhinnapatrabali*.

In this section, we turn our attention to the body of literature that emerged about railway travel. The sense of wonder and anxiety that we find in Tagore’s memoir is symptomatic of the feelings of the general populace regarding this new

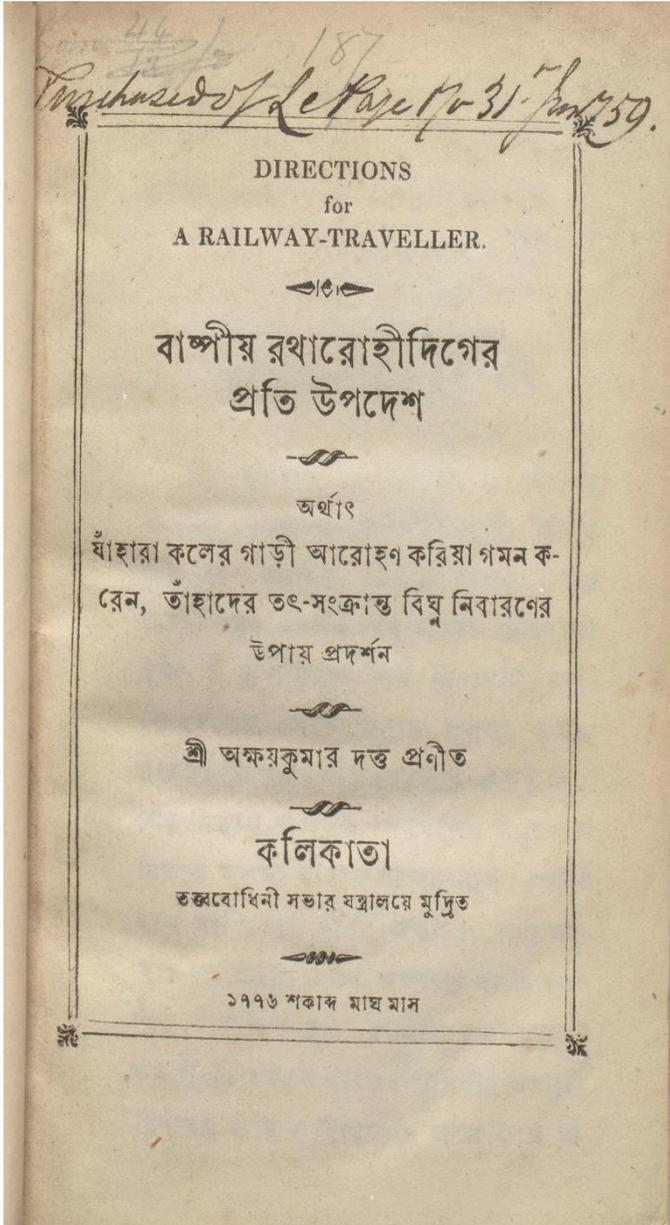


Figure 2.5

Serampore when some panic-stricken passengers jumped off and received grievous injuries. In this context, Akkhaykumar urges the

mode of transport. A pamphlet written by Akshay Kumar Dutta in 1854 and published by the Tatvabodhini Press instructs passengers on how to travel by rail. The pamphlet had a bilingual title – “Directions for a Railway Traveller” in English and “Bashpiya Ratharohidiger Proti Upodesh” in Bangla. Dutta has twelve instructions for the passenger. In his essay “Raising Steam”, Abhijit Gupta has discussed some of the instructions enumerated in the pamphlet. For instance:

The first exhorted the passenger not to entrain or detrain while the carriage was in motion. It referred to a recent incident of derailment near

passenger not to be taken in by the relatively slow speed of the train. The second rule warned passengers not to stick out their body parts through the windows, or to leap from one carriage onto another. Passengers are also warned not to ride on the roofs of carriages, an injunction which still remains relevant in certain sectors of Indian train riding.<sup>18</sup>

Another way for the railways to advertise themselves or disseminate relevant information to travellers was the *panjika* or *panji*. The *panjika* was a kind of astrological almanac that also provided instructions to the readers on how to go about their daily lives in accordance with the planetary movements. Asit Pal has noted that by the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, the *panjika* had become a prominent part of the Bengali household and featured in the designated room for the household deities, or the *thhakur ghor*. The *panjika* was marketed as a text by reading which, one could accrue virtues or at the very least, diminish some of the baggage of sin. The popularity of the *panjika* was quickly recognised by those in the field of business and they began to use it as a vehicle for publishing advertisements (6–7). This included the railways. This is interesting also because, as Asit Pal has pointed out, the *panjika* also provided instructions about when to set foot outside the house (82).

The *Nutan Panjika* of 1872, for instance, had two brief sections entitled *Jatrar Din Gonona* [Calculating the Days for Travel] and *Jatrar Dibas* [The Day of Travel] based on the rhyming couplets of Khana or Khawna, the Bengali female astrologer. The first section provides instructions on how to calculate the day on which to travel according to Khana,

Tithi baar nakhsatra mash er joto din  
Ekotro koriya shob saat-e koro heen  
Eke shubho duye labh tine shotrukkhoy  
Choturthete karjosidhhi ponchome sangshay  
Sasthete moron hoy shunye hoy sukh  
E dine korile jatra kobhu nahi dukkho (93).

[Calculate and reduce to seven all the lunar days and days of the month. One spells auspiciousness, two signals profit, three – the

destruction of enemies, four means success while five means doubt, six signifies death and zero spells happiness. If you set out on this day, all will be well].

Nilay Kumar Saha has cited the *Nutan Panjika* published in 1263 BS (1856) which published an advertisement of the East India Railways with information regarding fares, a timetable, and general rules. This would be the format for their advertisements published in various panjikas in the years that followed. The advertisement from 1856 states that any child below the age of one year could travel for free while half the fare had to be paid for children below the age of twelve (52–53).

Asit Pal has discussed an advertisement published by the East India Railways in 1903. The advertisement mentioned that the local time in Madras was followed in the timetable, which was thirty-three minutes behind Kolkata, seven minutes behind Allahabad, twelve minutes ahead of Delhi, eight minutes ahead of Agra, and thirty minutes ahead of Bombay. In this advertisement, we notice a change in the fares for children. It states that any child below the age of three can travel for free. The age for the half-fare remains the same (83).

Pal has argued that the advertisements must have been fruitful, because the railways continued to publish them in panjikas well into the twentieth century, right up to the Second World War (84–85).

The first poem about the railways in Bengal, Ramen Kumar Sar has noted, was a short poem in English published in the *Bengal Hurkaru*. It was titled “First Impressions and First Impulses of Railway Travelling.” One feature of the train that the poem highlights is its pace, a recurring characteristic of railway travel in other texts as well. The poem begins by invoking the image of lightning and moves on to more direct descriptions of speed. For instance, “Away; away; and on we dash!” In the second stanza, the poet refers to the train as his steed and they “speed like meteors through the sky” (quoted in Sar, 78).

Sumit Sarkar has argued that certain colonial institutions and establishments brought about significant changes in earlier conceptions of time. Time was now bound by and in a machine – the clock (16). Such institutions or establishments

included government offices, colonial schools, and the railways. It is worth remembering, however, that the trains in India, ever since their inception, were afflicted by a tendency to never run on time.

In pre-railways rural Bengal, notes Sumanta Bandyopadhyay (2003), time and distance had measures of their own (some of which continue to exist even today across rural India). Distance was conveyed through the expression “Daal bhanga krosh” [measured by a broken branch] and a year, Bandyopadhyay writes, was often imagined as having eighteen months (108). The railways struck at the heart of these ideas. A strange anxiety of an educated Bengali gentleman was reported by the *Bengal Hurkaru* on 23 August, 1854 (108). This gentleman travelled by train from Kolkata to Hoogly, but refused to make the return journey using the same mode of transport. This is because, the gentleman argued, if a train can cover the journey of six days in six hours, the span of a human life may also decrease while travelling by a train (108).

The first Bangla poem written about the railways has been identified by Sar as one penned by Ishwar Chandra Gupta, whom we have encountered earlier in this chapter. There is a reference to the railways in a poem titled “Sharadwarnan” published in *Sambad Prabhakar* in 1855, two months after the first train officially ran between Howrah and Hoogly. This same issue carried another poem with a reference to the steam engine in a rather unexpected context. The part of the poem in which the steam engine makes an appearance begins by saying that it may be possible to harness the wind and it may be possible to tie up the waves of the ocean, but it is impossible to imprison the heart. And then, inexplicably, the poem asks, “‘*Railroad-e’ bashoporath koto druto chole?/Koto bege goti hoy ‘electric kol-e’?*” which roughly translates to – “How fast does the steam chariot move on the railroad? What is the speed of the electric machine?” (quoted in Sar, 79).

*Sambad Prabhakar* also published a poem by Dinabandhu Mitra titled “Rail-er Gari.” Dinabandhu’s poem begins with a description of the science and technology of rail. He writes, “*Dhonyo dhonyo sukoushol/Jwoliche Angaranal/Poritopto kori jol/Bar kori bashpodol/Bege kol cholichhe.*” This is a literal description of the production of steam and how it powers the engine. And a few lines later he writes, “*Padartha bidyar bole/Khodiye bhudhordole/Surongo korechhe kol-e/Tar modhye*

*gari chole/Aparup dekhite,*” that is, physics has been used to build tunnels through which the beautiful trains pass. The poem also refers to the speed of the train which has made it possible for faraway places to now turn into neighbours. Dinabandhu writes, “*E para o para Kashi/Punjabira protibeshi/Sohoje Madraje asi/ Pobitro Gangay bhasi/Dibanishi royechhe*” [Kashi is right next door/The Punjabis are our neighbours now/We can visit Madras easily/And swim in the sacred Ganges]. In the final couple of stanzas of the poem, Dinabandhu suggests that the railways can be beneficial to the nation by uniting the race – “*Rail-er kalyane kobe/Mangal sadhan hobe/Bharater jati sobe/ Ekmoto hoye robe/Sumilone miliye*” [Due to the railways/All will be well/All the people of India/Will be united] (87–88).

The allusion to speed returns in two poems by Krishnakamini Dasi in *Chittabilasini*, the first book of poems by a Bengali woman to be published, in 1856. The first of the poems – “Jom-er Krondon” [The Tears of Yama] is an amusing account of the Hindu God of Death lamenting the coming of the railways to Lord Brahma. “They have built a strange machine,” he cries, “that flies like the wind.” A journey that would earlier take a month, he exaggerates, now takes but a day. The concern of the god is that sinners will continue to their misdeeds and then, when their time comes, they will rush off to Kashi by train. If they die in Kashi, they will go straight to Kailash, leaving his kingdom empty (80–81).

The second poem, titled “Birohinir Ullash” [The Lovelorn Woman Rejoicing] deals with a subject of the material world. Written in the first person, the poem describes the joy of a woman whose husband can now avail the train to return home more frequently from his workplace. She lavishes praise on the British for devising a vehicle that can bring her husband home (81–82).

Beyond the periodicals and tracts on travelling, the railways also found itself featuring in what has come to be known as Battala literature – the cheap and popular literary Bangla fare. One such was Munsif Azimuddin’s satire *Ki Mojar Kol-er Gari* published in 1863. Adris Biswas writes in the Introduction to his collection of twenty rare Battala texts, of which this play is a part, “[The subject of this play] is men and women from this part of the world making plans to and also seeing a train. It shows the duel between an ancient mind and a new vehicle. The conflict between trust and the lack thereof. The joy of discovery of the changes taking place in the nineteenth

century. It also captures the hearts and minds of the general populace as well as their practical life” (2011, 55).

The play begins with a song sung by women about the railways: “*Baniyechhe rail, road-er gari dhonyo sahib karikor/Ekhon Bishwakarmar puja chhere oi sahebke puja kor*” [All hail the sahibs who have made trains and railroads/ Now quit praying to Bishwakarma and hail the sahib Lord] (283). Although satirical, the song also has an allusion to a lover arriving by train and women calling to one another to get ready for the lover’s arrival. The women sing, “*Aye go didi bela gelo, matha bñadhi giye cholo,/Istishane gari elo, bnodhu ashbar katha chhilo, ahlade/Dholiya pori, dhor go didi dhor go dhor*” [Come, sister, the day is ending/Let’s go and tie our hair/The train has come to the station/My lover was supposed to come/In happiness I melt/Hold me close, sister, hold me close] (283).

The first part of the play depicts a conversation between an old woman and a young wife about how the railways had made it possible for the husbands to come home more often. There is a subtle allusion to how the couples can now consummate their relationship more often through a veiled reference to having children more frequently (283–84). Another benefit of the railways is that the husband now has to think twice before speaking rudely to his wife, who can now easily set off for her mother’s house if she is upset (285). However, the railways has its drawbacks as well. The wife says, “I am scared to speak to someone. What if *katta* [the man of the house; italics mine] arrives suddenly?” (285). There is also an episode featuring a married woman and her lover where the former realises that the train has pulled into the station, thus worrying her that her husband is about to arrive (290).

Kaliprasanna Sinha’s *Hutom Pnyachar Naksha* was first published in 1862, a year before the publication of Azimuddin’s farce-play. The author and the text have both received academic as well as non-academic attention and therefore require no further introduction here. The focus here is on one particular sketch entitled “Railway”. Arun Nag has noted that “Railway” was actually a parody of a religious novel by Peary Chand Mitra entitled *Jatkinchit*. The novel traces the travels of two religious friends, Premananda and Gnyanananda, across north India. In the course of their travels, they meet with several characters—believers and non-believers—and through their good deeds and advice, they preach the glory of God to the people they

meet. In Hutom's sketch, Premananda and Gnyanananda stand in for the real-life figures of Peary Chand Mitra and his friend (and, later, relation by marriage), Shibchandra Deb (264–66).

The sketch opens thus: “A train service was started from Howrah to Allahabad during the holidays for Durga puja. [...] A lot of people were making the journey for the fun of it. There were many pilgrims too” (Roy, 2008, 176). Two things are immediately worth noting. In less than two decades since the establishment of the railways, train services were being inaugurated during the holiday season, suggesting that tourism had already emerged in this time span in Bengal. This is corroborated by Hutom's statement that while the more traditional pilgrims formed a part of the crowd, many were also travelling for amusement. This section would like to draw attention to the (slightly long) description of the third-class compartment by Hutom in this sketch.

Meanwhile the train entered the *terminus* with a loud hissing noise. Tununang, tununang, the bells sounded again. Passengers piled into the train noisily. People were shoved into the *third-class* compartments by the *guard* and two musketeers. ‘Now where do you think you're going’ — ‘Sir, there's no room here.’ — ‘My bundle! Please give me my bundle.’ — ‘That's my kid! Hey you bastard, don't sit on his neck.’ — screams of this kind floated out of the compartments. But the *railway* staff, bound as they were by regulations, didn't pay heed to the shouts! Although each of the *third-class* compartments already resembled a crab's womb, the *stationmaster* and *guard* kept peeping in from time to time to see if there was any space inside. If, by any chance, they found any breathing space inside the compartments, they'd cram a few more passengers into them. Had the hapless English who'd survived the Black Hole seen the *third-class* compartments, they'd have gathered the courage to tell the East India Company's *agents* and *locomotive superintendents* one day that the pain suffered by the *third-class* passengers in their trains was in no way less than the pain suffered by those trapped in the Black Hole! (188–89)

Arun Nag has noted the striking resemblance of this section to a letter by a reader published in the *Hindu Patriot* on 17 March 1859:

Notwithstanding that all the cabs were crammed to the very door by the persons that had been booked at the actual station house, no less than five hundred passangers [sic] who had their tickets from the Calcutta side of the river were mercilessly thrust in them without regard even to sex or age [...] It was with great difficulty that I managed to stand near the door; but the instant after another parcel of about half a dozen of unhappy beings were pushed in and to add to our misery the door was locked up immediately ... Dear Mr. Editor, if you had seen the ghastly countenances of those wretched victims, you would have perhaps thought that the prisoners in the Black Hole had been comparatively happy... (Note 629, 277–78).

As Nag has also noted, such letters and negative reports were not exceptional. The author of an article published in the *Bengalee* in 1865 lamented that, “The Railway Company are not acting up to the rules laid down by our thoughtful governor General for the comfort of third and fourth-class passengers. I travelled on the Eastern Bengal line last Saturday; and cannot describe the inconvenience I suffered...” (quoted in Sar, 132).<sup>19</sup>

There were other kinds of problems as well, one of them being trains running late, a problem that persists to this day. An article published in *Som Prakash* in March, 1866, claims that a passenger on an afternoon mail train from Pundooah [sic] to Howrah complained that the train was “four hours behind her time; and when she did arrive, there were no lights in the carriages” (quoted in Sar, 137).

An 1858 issue of the *Hindu Patriot* also claimed that passengers in the third class were “brutally treated”. The article goes on to say:

They are hustled about, bullied, struck more especially by the chowkeedars. [...] We have ourselves seen whole crowds of men, usually clerks, sircars, and others of a grade high enough to feel dishonour as well as pain tarn a blow, driven into the carriages like sheep into pens (quoted in Sar, 57–58).

The space of the train itself was also a contentious site. The primary fear surrounding the sea voyage was the free inter-mingling of various castes aboard the vessel – a space where such hierarchical categories would temporarily have to be suspended. The train also posed similar threats. However, as Sumanta Bandyopadhyay notes, the anxiety of the upper-caste Hindu was not entertained either by the railway authorities or by fellow passengers (112). In response to an objection raised by a Hindu Brahmin regarding the inter-mingling of castes in a train compartment, the Chief Engineer of the Madras Railways in 1854 had declared that it was not the task of the railway authorities to follow the strictures of either religion or caste and therefore it would not be possible to arrange separate compartments for separate castes (112).

Yet, as we see in the commentary of Bandyopadhyay and others, the railway authorities had no qualms about racial segregation. Malavika Karlekar (2015) writes, “A railway journey was not an enviable experience for all: the train became another site for racial segregation. [...] In fact, it would not be too fanciful to imagine an early train as India in microcosm: the rulers cocooned in luxury, a few privileged Indians their neighbours in a compartment [...], and the majority of the passengers in second, and, more likely, third-class carriages” (211).

An 1856 issue of *Sambad Prabhakar* reported that one Baboo Jadab Chandra Sil was thrown out of a first-class compartment by some Englishmen when he tried to enter the carriage dressed in the traditional attire of a dhoti and shawl. Down but not out, Sil filed a complaint and the sahibs had to pay a substantial sum of money as punishment for their action (Sar, 295).

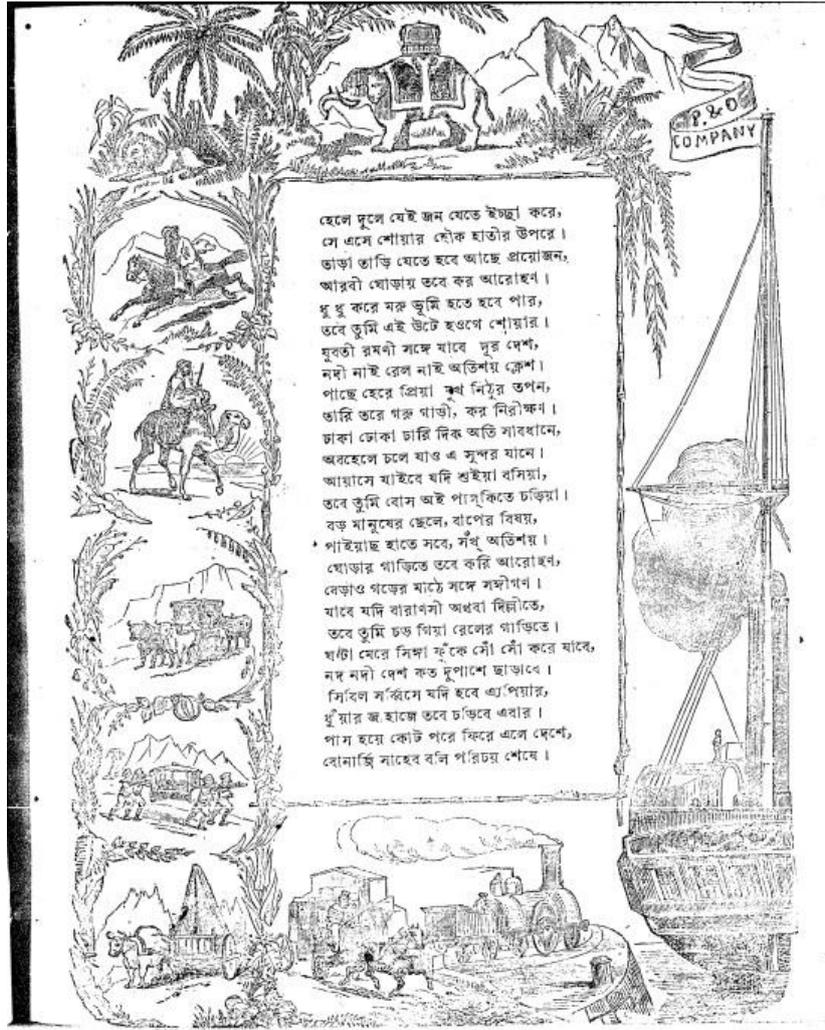
Indians were humiliated and forced to disembark from carriages reserved for “Europeans Only.” In a section that carries the same title, Leela Majumdar, in her collection of short, mostly humorous pieces, compiled into the work titled *Kheror Khata*, writes, “A long time ago, several trains had two special third-class carriages. One was for men. On the door it said ‘Europeans Only’. The door of the other compartment was marked ‘European Ladies Only’. [...] There were also special carriages for women of this country. The doors of such compartments had ‘Females’ written on them. There would be a framed picture on one side. An Indian woman with

a veil covering half her face. Seeing that, one could easily tell who was supposed to ride in it” (7).

The need for separate compartments for women arose largely from an issue of safety. Railway travel could often be dangerous, as evidenced by many such incidents reported in Bangla newspapers and magazines. Dangers ranged from being pickpocketed to getting murdered (Sar, 46–50). There are also reports of women being sexually harassed aboard trains (50–51). One such incident was reported in the periodical *Bharati o Balak* (quoted in Sar, 51–52).

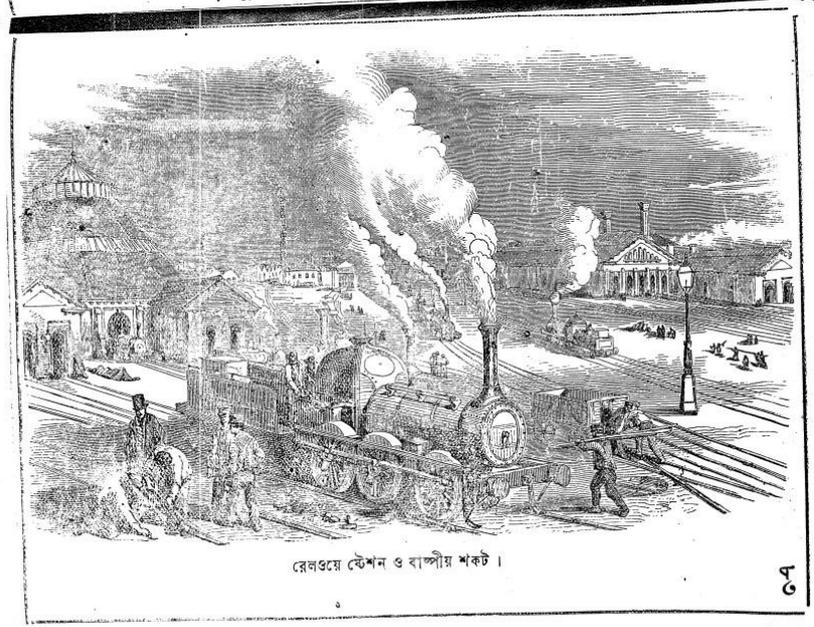
*Bharati o Balak* was a periodical that primarily targeted women and children as their readership. From this point, it would be worth noting the experiences of children aboard the train, as this chapter had begun to do with Rabindranth’s memoir. This section will also discuss how the rail featured in poems and prose (fiction and non-fiction) written for a juvenile readership.

The second volume of *Jyotirangan*, one of the earlier periodicals aimed at children, published a poem entitled “Nanabidho Jaan” [Various Vehicles] depicts various modes of transport – elephant, horse, camel, cart, palanquin, carriage, ship, and train. The humorous poem describes the merits of each mode of transport based on the needs/wishes of the traveller. The accompanying plate shows each mode of transport. The last couple of lines of the poem jokes about how someone who has returned from foreign shores after travelling on a ship will be known as a sahib when they come home, referring to the idea of crossing the *kalapani* and the popular notion that one would fall from the position of one’s caste if they crossed the black waters (137). The issue, published in January, 1871, included an image of a train standing at a station. In the foreground of the image is a man in a top hat, almost certainly British, overseeing workers (87).



হেলে দুলে যেই জন যেতে ইচ্ছা করে,  
 সে এনে শোয়ার শৌক হাতীর উপরে ।  
 ভাড়া ভাড়া যেতে হবে আছে প্রয়োজন,  
 আরবী খোড়ায় তবে কর আরোহণ ।  
 দু হু করে মর ভুমি হতে হবে পার,  
 তবে তুমি এই উটে হওগে শোয়ার ।  
 মূলতী রমনী সন্ধে যাবে দূর দেশ,  
 নদী নাই রেল নাই অতিশয় ক্লেশ ।  
 পাছে হেরে প্রিয়া কুখ নিতুর গুণন,  
 ভারি করে গরু পাড়ী, কর নিরীক্ষণ ।  
 ঢাকা ঢাকা চারি দিক অতি সাবধানে,  
 অবহেলে চলে যাও এ সুখের যানে ।  
 আয়ালে বাইবে যদি শুইয়া বসিয়া,  
 তবে তুমি বোস আই পানুকিতে চড়িয়া ।  
 বড় মানুষের ছেলে, বাপের বিষয়,  
 পাইয়াছ হাতে মবে, নুখ অতিশয় ।  
 খোড়ার পাকিতে তবে করি আরোহণ,  
 বেড়াও পড়ের মাঠে সন্দে সঙ্গীষণ ।  
 যাবে যদি বারানসী অথবা বিল্লীতে,  
 তবে তুমি চড় গিয়া রেলের পাড়িতে ।  
 খাটা ঘেরে দিগ্ধা ফুকে নৌ নৌ করে যাবে,  
 নদ নদী বেশ কত দুপাশে জাভাবে ।  
 সিংহল সুরিন্দে যদি হবে এ পিয়ার,  
 দুয়ার জ হাজে তবে চড়বে এবার ।  
 পাস হয়ে কোট পরে ফিরে এলে দেশে,  
 বোনাজি সাহেব বলি পরিচয় শেষে ।

Figure 2.6



রেলওয়ে স্টেশন ও বাষ্পীয় শকট ।

৬৭

Figure 2.7

In *Shishu*, Harachandra Barma wrote on the history of the railways which was accompanied by the image of a train. In this piece, he discussed the life of George Stephenson, the British civil and mechanical engineer who is known as the “Father of the Railways.” Stephenson’s story—his humble beginnings and subsequent achievement—is presented as a moral tale advocating hard work and enterprise (313–19).<sup>20</sup>

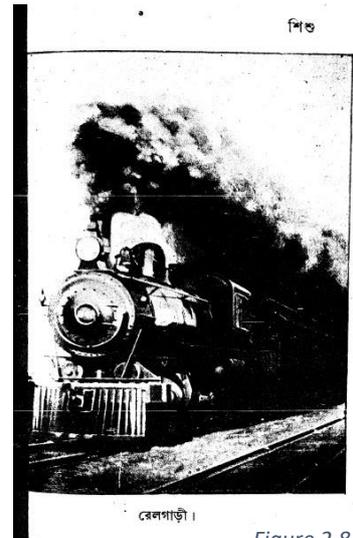


Figure 2.8

An article published in *Sakha* enumerated the benefits of the railways. The author, Pramada Charan Sen, begins by saying that when he was young, he harboured several misconceptions about the railways. However, a closer inspection would



Figure 2.9

reveal, Sen argues, that the railways have been extremely beneficial to the country. One, it has made travelling faster and safer. Two, it has improved trade. Three, it has helped in the dissemination of knowledge. Four, those who work in the city can now live elsewhere because travelling to the urban centre for work has been made easier by the introduction of the railways. After listing the benefits, Sen goes on to provide a brief history of the railways, mentioning James Watt and George Stephenson (57–59). The article presents the steam engine and the railways to its young readers as a marvel of technological advancement.

Malavika Karlekar writes that children, and especially those children who travelled in the first-class, were not afflicted with the adult fears of the dangers of the railways. “Colonial memoirs,” she writes, “recount many such journeys, some more exciting than others” (214). Karlekar mentions Jon and Rumer Godden, for instance, who, in their work *Two Under the Indian Sun*, “write of long train journeys to north Indian hill stations” in the second decade of the twentieth century (214). This chapter, however, will focus on Bengali colonial childhoods and in this context, discuss excerpts from Punyalata Chakrabarti’s (1890–1974) childhood memoirs *Chhelebelar Dinguli* [Childhood Days] with regards to not just the experience of a child travelling by train, but also within the larger context of the culture of travelling with the family during vacations. It is also important to note that Punyalata’s text is meant for a young readership.

In Chapter Five of *Chhelebelar Dinguli*, she writes, “Every year, during the vacations, we would travel with our parents either to the mountains, or the west, or to our ‘*desh*’” (27). From this very first sentence, we can identify two things – first, the time of the year when the family travelled, and two, the general destinations of such travels. Records from the railways suggest that trains would be extremely crowded during the puja vacations in September–October (Sar, 33–34). Hutom’s sketch has already noted that even in the 1860s, people were travelling for amusement, not with any specific purpose. Abanindranath Tagore’s daughter Uma Debi, in her reminiscences about her father, writes that they would always travel during the summer vacations (33). Punyalata is almost certainly writing about her experiences from the end of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, by which time, it is safe to assume, that travelling during the holidays had more or less established itself as a custom. This is a point to which we shall return later. For now, let us turn our attention back to Punyalata.

In this opening paragraph, Punyalata further writes of the other various modes of transport that they would have to avail before they could reach their ‘*desh bari*’ in East Bengal. These modes of transport included the steamer, boat, palanquin, and even an elephant (27).

The journey from Kolkata to their *desh bari* was a long one. First, they would board a train from Sealdah that took them to Goalondo. From here, they would

board a steamer. Punyalata reminisces that they never wanted to stay inside the cabins. All day long they would stand on the deck, watching the scenes on either side of the river. Sometime around evening, they would reach Narayangunj where they had to board a train once more. Late in the night, they would alight at Kaoraid and take a boat. Even after the boat reached the shore, the house was a long way away. Palanquins and elephants would wait there to take them home. Punyalata writes that the older men in the family would ride on the elephants while the palanquins were used by the women and children (27–29).

Satadru Sen (2004) identifies four primary geographies of literary childhood in colonial Bengal.<sup>21</sup> Of these, one is the ‘real’ home, for which Sen also uses the epithets of ‘dysfunctional’ and ‘comic’; and one was the ‘lost’ home which was also ‘nostalgic’ and ‘fantastic’. Sen notes that a split between two homes—the colonial city and the ancestral countryside—is fundamental to the juvenile periphery of colonial childhood in juvenile fiction from this period. This ancestral home is usually tinged with a sense of nostalgia – a lost home with which is associated a longing to return. “The landscape of the past,” he writes, “were typically constructed as the innermost refuge of the colonized child: a space charged with escapism, innocence, femininity and other ‘mindsets’ that may be experienced as nostalgia.”<sup>22</sup>

In the context of Punyalata Chakrabarti’s memoirs, the non-fictional narrative is already located in the past. That home is perhaps already gone, as is her mother’s maternal uncle’s home, which has been swallowed by the ruthless Padma (27). This sense of loss is echoed by Punyalata at the end of the chapter when she writes that as an adult, she has never gone back to her ancestral home. That home, then, is frozen in the past, in her childhood. Punyalata wonders now what changes may have taken place in that part of the world and says, “Perhaps it is all there – the rivers and ponds and fields, the green paddy fields, the jute fields, the dense orchards of mangoes and jackfruits – perhaps it is still the same, but aunts and grandmothers are gone” (36).

Punyalata’s narrative notes the divide between the two homes as two spaces. The space and image of the home in the country or ‘desh’ is mostly populated by women. Punyalata writes, “The houses, the gardens, the ponds all seemed like a new land to us” (30). She writes about being able to collect flowers from the garden and pick fruits from the trees; she writes about beautiful hand-crafted toys and sweets

made by their aunts and grandmothers (30). This, of course, is the gaze of the city-born and city-bred child – the words Punyalata herself uses in the beginning of the chapter to describe herself and her siblings (27). Interestingly, though, she also inverts this gaze, saying that just as everything in the village seemed like a novelty to them, they were also a novelty in the eyes of the people in the village (31).

In her childhood memoirs, Punyalata also writes about a trip to Darjeeling. Darjeeling had emerged as one of the most popular tourist destinations for both the British and the Bengalis quite early on, although getting to this hill station took quite a long time. Darjeeling features prominently in letters, memoirs, and travelogues of many Bengali authors including Debendranath Tagore, Rabindranath Tagore, Shibnath Shastri, Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, Tarapada Bandyopadhyay, Swarnakumari Devi, and Leela Majumdar, among others. For this reason, the hill station, which continues to be a popular tourist destination, requires further discussion and attention.

### **The History of Darjeeling**

“Till 1878,” Abhishek Sarkar informs us, “a train ran from Saraghat to Siliguri on a metre gauge track. From Siliguri, those headed for Darjeeling would have to hire a horse or a *dandi* or walk for a week to reach their destination” (2018, 135). The Himalayan Railway Company was formed in 1879 based on a proposal for building a railroad that would connect Siliguri and Darjeeling. By March 1880, tracks had been laid till Tindharia. By August that year, the railroad was extended to Kurseong and on 4 July 1881, the entire stretch from Siliguri to Darjeeling became functional (135). This was the toy train. Punyalata writes:

I had gone to Darjeeling when I was very small and remembered nothing about it. My siblings would talk about it and I would listen. This time, when I heard that we’d be going to Darjeeling for the summer holidays, I was very happy. [...]

This is more than fifty years ago. Sara bridge was yet to be built. You’d have to cross from Saraghat to Damukdiyaghat on a

boat and catch a train from the other side. [From Siliguri] we boarded a small train. Nowadays, a lot of people travel by car because the train takes a long time. Recently, a plane service has also been started. There were no planes or motors in those days and even the trains were very slow. But this had one benefit. One had the time to take in the scenery on either side (86).

One of the recurrent motifs in descriptions of the journey up the mountain to Darjeeling is of the shifting clouds and the sense of height. Punyalata's descriptions are no exception. She writes:

Sometimes when we can see the plain lands below – just like a colourful relief map someone has spread out – then we can understand how high up we are. We have gone above the clouds. The sun is shining over our heads and there are clouds in the lap of the mountains below us. The rays of the sun have fallen on those clouds and created a rainbow that has climbed up the mountain. How beautiful it looks! (87)

Punyalata compares the town of Darjeeling to a pretty picture, the most marvelous aspect of which are the snow-clad mountains. In the paintings and sketches of Upendrakishore and others, it is the mountains, especially the Kanchenjunga, that feature most prominently. This will be further discussed in the chapter on landscapes.

Besides the scenic beauty of the mountains and the quaint hill station, locals—especially local women—enter Punyalata's narrative mostly as working women. At the station, for instance, they notice that the coolies are all women. Punyalata marvels at the strength of these mountain-girls, able to lift huge suitcases with ease on their backs (88). She notes that shopkeepers are also mostly women and many of them wear heavy gold and silver jewellery. She praises the beauty of the Nepali girls but complains that “The poor people are very dirty. It is a cold land, so they don't want to take baths. [...] But beautiful or not, clean or dirty, all of them look healthy and always have a smile on their faces” (88–89).

Another point to note in the culture of travel that was developing in Bengal at the time is that such family tours usually involved, at least among those who could

afford it, the renting of a house or a bungalow. In Darjeeling, for instance, the Raychaudhuri family is staying in a house that has already been fixed up for them by a woman Punyalata refers to as Subala Mashi, whose family resides next door (88).

In case of older forms of travel such as pilgrimages, the travellers would seek shelter in small inns or chotis along the way. Jaladhar Sen, who travelled across the Himalayas in the northern part of the country, in his travelogue *Himalay* (first published serially in *Bharati* in 1893), recounts both amusing and horrifying experiences at such inns in which they stayed during their arduous journey. Embarking on a pilgrimage also meant one had to arrange for one's meals or depend upon the kindness of others. The difficulty of the journey, especially in the era before the railways, was built into the larger project of accruing virtues. Hardships had to be endured, obstacles overcome, and dangers faced if one wanted to lessen the burden of sin.

With the establishment and expansion of the railways, much of this began to change and new cultures of travel began to emerge, which included the family tour or family vacation, that can be read within the larger socio-economic context of the emergence of a leisure class in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is worth noting, however, that leisure travel or recreational travel was not a British-era novelty in India in general or Bengal in particular. Mughal emperors, for instance, travelled to places like Kashmir to escape the scorching summer heat of Delhi. The British in India continued this tradition and expanded the spots to include hill stations in both northern and eastern India as well as parts of southern India. Places like Simla, Dalhousie, and Mussourie in the north and Darjeeling in the east emerged as the summer destinations for the upper echelons of British society in India. Nandini Bhattacharya (2013) notes that “the hill-stations were built to facilitate the recuperation of European bodies from the heat and diseases of the plains. From the mid-nineteenth century, towns like Darjeeling, Shimla and Ootacamund were established as a requisite of colonial administration” (442–43).<sup>23</sup>

A few hotels and a number of boarding houses had been constructed in Darjeeling to house the sojourners. Edmund Mitchell wrote a guidebook to Darjeeling which was published by Thacker's in 1891. It begins with a chapter outlining the history of Darjeeling and how it came to be occupied by the British, and the chapters that follow provide information on how to get to Darjeeling, its flora and fauna, the "aboriginal tribes", hotels and boarding houses, educational institutions, agriculture and trade. Mitchell also dedicates a chapter to talk about Darjeeling as a health resort.

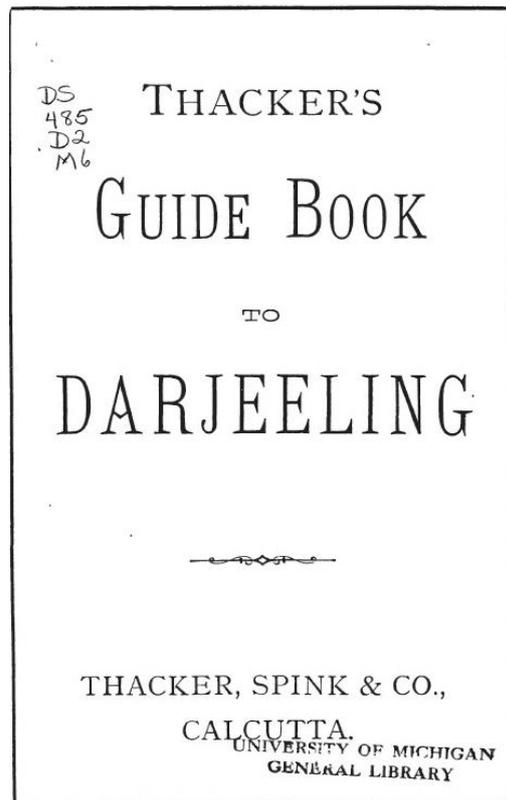


Figure 2.10

In the chapter entitled "The Journey to the Hills", Mitchell writes, "The trip to Darjeeling is now-a-days accomplished with the greatest comfort and ease, under circumstances very different from those ruling in the early years of the popularity of the station, when the long winding ascent had to be made by dak palkees, hill ponies, or tonga carriages" (8). Mitchell effusively praises the technological marvel of the railways in being able to lay tracks in the mountains as well as build a train which, though at first appearance may appear to be almost like a toy, can chug its way up the zigzag mountain roads. While aboard this train, Mitchell writes, "[...] the traveller will also be struck with admiration for the superbly magnificent scenery above, around, and beneath him. No spectacle in the world is more grand. Lofty peaks tower overhead, usually with fleecy clouds dotting out the green with white, and here and there some taller summit disappearing quite into cloud-land (14)."

Five years later, when Mark Twain visited India, he wrote about his journey on the same toy-train in *Following the Equator*:

The road is infinitely and charmingly crooked. It goes winding in and out under lofty cliffs that are smothered in vines and foliage, and around the edges of bottomless chasms; and all the way one glides by files of picturesque natives, some carrying burdens up, others going down from their work in the tea-gardens [...]

By and by we were well up in the region of the clouds, and from that breezy height we looked down and afar over a wonderful picture – the Plains of India, stretching to the horizon, soft and fair, level as a floor, shimmering with heat, mottled with cloud-shadows, and cloven with shining rivers (529).

He writes also of women carrying loads on their shoulders and backs and marvels at their strength:

And we had passed shoals of their women climbing the forty miles of steep road from the valley to their mountain homes, with tall baskets on their backs hitched to their foreheads by a band, and containing a freightage weighing—I will not say how many hundreds of pounds, for the sum is unbelievable. These were young women, and they strode smartly along under these astonishing burdens with the air of people out for a holiday. I was told that a woman will carry a piano on her back all the way up the mountain; and that more than once a woman had done it. If these were old women I should regard the Ghurkas as no more civilized than the Europeans (530).

Mark Twain stayed at a hotel in Darjeeling, but he does not mention it by name. From Mitchell's guidebook, we have the following information about hotels and boarding houses in Darjeeling:

The hotels in Darjeeling are two in number, Wood lands and Drum-Druid, being the names of the establishments. Both are well-conducted. The hotel charges are Rs. 7 per diem, or Rs 6 per diem when the stay made is for a month [...] (72)

There are a number of excellent boarding houses in Darjeeling, the principal being Rockville, Rosebank (formerly the residence of the Maharajah of Burdwan), Gresham House, Step-a-side<sup>24</sup>, Ada Villa, and Meadow Bank, the last named being in connection with Drum- Druid Hotel. The charges average Rs. 6 per diem (72).

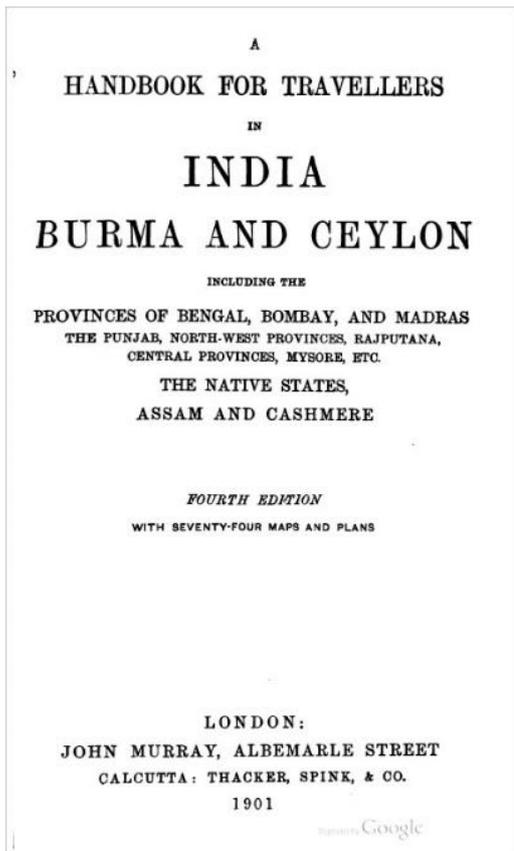


Figure 2.11

Of these, Ada Villa survives today as Windamere Hotel, now advertising its colonial heritage. The hotel website has a section called ‘Memories of the Raj,’ asking its guests to share their memories for those who were not, according to the website, *lucky* [italics mine] enough to be present in those times.<sup>25</sup> This sort of advertising, aside from its packaging of a terrible past and tainted memory into a

*A Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon* was also published by Thacker’s in 1892. This mentions six hotels, namely – Boscolo’s Grand Hotel, Woodlands Hotel, Rockville House, Grand Hotel, Drum Druid, and Darjeeling House. It also provides a list of boarding houses – Ada Villa, Rose Bank, Gresham House (471).

ADVERTISEMENT.

---

**Extract from "WHERE TO STAY."**

**ROCKVILLE HOTEL.**

THIS Hotel is one of the finest summer residences in India, and provides First class Accommodation for Tourists, Visitors, &c. Finest Cuisine and Cellar, large, well-ventilated and elegantly-furnished Bed-rooms, Hot and Cold Baths. Letters and Telegrams promptly attended to. Tariff of Charges on application to the Manager.



The Snows from Rockville Hotel.

MRS. MONK,  
Proprietress.

**GRAND HOTEL.**

This Hotel provides First-class Accommodation for Tourists, Visitors and Commercial Gentlemen. Within a few minutes of the Post Office. Charges moderate. Finest Cuisine and Cellar, large, well-ventilated and elegantly-furnished Bedrooms, Hot and Cold Baths. Letters and Telegrams promptly attended to. Tariff of Charges on application to the Manager.



Grand Hotel, Calcutta.

MRS. MONK,  
Proprietress.

Figure 2.12

cheerful mould, also ties in with the colonial era production of Darjeeling as a commodity, “a landscape more defined by its scenery than by its inhabitants; a place you visit rather than a place of belonging” (Bennike, 2018).

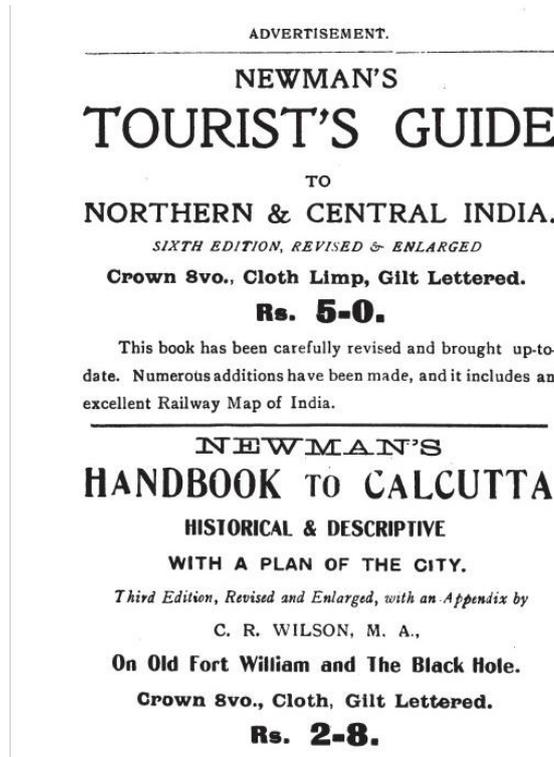


Figure 2.13

evidence of in the travelogues written for children, the inhabitants of Darjeeling occupy a peripheral position, if indeed they are included in the narrative. It is worth noting the similarity of description used by Mark Twain (a traveller from abroad) and Punyalata Chakrabarti's memory of her journey on the toy-train. The reason that such spaces appear to be “empty” or devoid of people, Bennike notes, is because the bhadralok (and, on occasion, also the bhadramohila) “employed cultural techniques such as travel writing to set themselves aside ‘as the principal claimants of an emerging nation-space’” (65).

### Another West

Other places mentioned by Punyalata in her childhood memoir as holidays destinations include Madhupur, Chunar, and Pachamba. Often referred to simply as ‘paschim’, or the ‘west,’ small towns of present-day Bihar and Jharkhand made their

The Bengali middle class certainly visited Darjeeling often, and in great numbers.<sup>26</sup> Punyalata, for instance, remembers sitting near the station every day and noting the arrival of familiar faces (93). Bennike points out that in a way, the holidays undertaken by the middle-classes to the hill station reflects the journey of the British—as “secular sojourners” from Kolkata—a trend that continues even after Independence (66). In their writing too, as we have seen with Punyalata Chakrabarti and will later find

way into the list of tourist destinations, primarily as a part of ‘medical tourism’. In the use of the word *paschim* as an all-encompassing word for these varied locations, we notice, on the one hand, the ‘relational’ production of place (61), and, on the other, a process of homogenisation of these places. We have already noted an early instance of medical tourism in the letters of Ishwar Chandra Gupta. In this section we delve slightly deeper into this new culture of travel.

Simonti Sen (2021) writes that from the 1870s, “after Bengal and places of Bihar got connected through railways, there began a perceptible trend among middle class Bengalis to go to these places and set up temporary habitations. These were long-term leisurely tours when the Bengali baboos would interact with the local tribal populace deriving all sorts of economic and extra-economic advantages from them” (44–45). A reference to Sanjib Chandra Chattopadhyay’s *Palamou* is unavoidable in this context. Parimal Bhattacharya has rightly pointed out that Chattopadhyay’s Romantic description of the forest and its people had far reaching effects – becoming a kind of model for subsequent cultural output, but also influencing the gaze with which this ‘other’ west would be viewed (9).<sup>27</sup>

*Palamou* was first published serially in the Bangla periodical *Bangadarshan*, edited by Sanjib Chandra’s brother Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay between 1287 and 1289 BS (1880–82). It was not published as a book during Sanjib Chandra’s lifetime. After his death, it was included in *Sanjibani Sudha* – a collection of his works edited by Bankim Chandra. Journeys to and living in parts of *paschim* appear in memoirs and stories from this period as well, Punyalata’s *Chhelebelar Dinguli* being a case in point. Unlike the chapter on Darjeeling, which includes detailed descriptions of the journey uphill (possibly included because of the novelty) and the scenic beauty, the chapters on Madhupur and Pachamba, as well as Chunar, include anecdotes about incidents and experiences involving the author and her family members, especially siblings, during the time that they spent there.

In Chapter Eight of her childhood memoir, Punyalata recounts an amusing incident involving the train. Their house in Madhupur, she writes, was next to the station with the tracks running behind their house. While they had their breakfast on the verandah, she writes, the mail train would pass by. The guards had become familiar to them and they would already be smiling as they passed. The children had

devised a game with them in which they would gesture to the guards to come join them for tea and the guards, in response, would also gesture back as if to say they would join them shortly. The amusing incident also involves a passing train. Punyalata and her siblings were waiting to see a train their father had taken to go to Kolkata. But while her siblings had spotted their father, Punyalata missed out. She writes, “When we had come, our carriage was green. So, with my mouth wide open, I was looking for a green carriage. But this time around, the carriage was white” (47).

Indira Debi has memories of travelling to Hazaribag with her uncle Rabindranath. The trip was made on her insistence, for she wanted to visit one of her favourite teachers—a Sister Aloysia—who had been transferred there. They travelled by train to Hazaribag and had to take a pushpush—a kind of palanquin that has to be physically pushed—to the dakbungalow (135).

Who pushed the palanquin? In writing about Darjeeling and ‘paschim’, Bengali bhadraloks and bhadramahilas rarely acknowledge the presence of the tribal population of these lands, unless it is, occasionally, to point out and marvel at their hardworking nature and physical prowess. Bhattacharya notes that “For the Bengalis, they [the people of the Chhota Nagpur plateau], like the Gorkhas of Darjeeling, remained epitomes of innocence” (8). This construction and marginalisation were a result, no doubt, of the hierarchy of caste, class, and race and allowed the bhadralok/mahila to construct their own selfhood in relation and opposition to the savage (or, as Sanjeeb Chandra would say, ‘bonyo’] other.<sup>28</sup> It is not within the scope of this work to delve deeper into the representation of the ‘paschim’ and its people in Bangla literature which continued well into the twentieth century after being inaugurated by Sanjeeb Chandra in *Palamau*.<sup>29</sup> We turn our attention, now, to guidebooks.

### **Railway Guides and History**

The first history of the railways by a Bengali was written by Kalidas Maitra. This work, entitled *Bhashpiya Kol o Bharatbarshiya Railway*, was published from Srerampore in 1262 BS (1855). The text, running into over three hundred pages, contained a history of the railways in India, the outlook and aims of the company, the conditions in this country, a detailed description of the places through which the trains

ran including their histories, a timetable, and rules of the railways, among other things (Sar, 104–05). He noted, for instance, that the main aim of the Company for establishing railways in India was for easy transportation of soldiers (104). In this context, we can think of the role the railways played in quelling the Santhal Uprising.

## বাপ্পীয় কল এবং ভারতবর্ষীয় রেলওয়ে

উপক্রমিকার্থ্য

পরম পুরুষ রূপানিকরে মানবানিকবকে যে  
অপূর্ব জ্ঞানরূপ পরম ধন প্রদান করিয়াছেন,  
সেই মহামহিমায় জ্ঞানের মহাপ্রভায় মনুষ্য-  
গণ গহন কানন বাসি পশুগণকে, ও গভীর সঙ্গি-  
লবাসি নক্রাদিকে, ও শূন্যগামি পক্ষিগণকে, ও  
শৈলবাসি পশুরাজকে, ও ভূতাদিকে সম্পূর্ণরূপে  
আজ্ঞাধীন করিতে একপ ক্ষমতাবান; যেকপ দাস-  
দাসীগণ প্রভুর জডনী ঈক্ষণে তদাজ্ঞা পালনে  
যত্নবান, যেকপ ভূচর বনচর, জলচর খেচর মনুষ্যের  
বশীভূত যেকপ নিজীব জড় বস্তু বহি ও অমৃ

Figure 2.14

৩২২

বাপ্পীয় কল ও

ভ্রম শোধন।

[যেহেতু রেলওয়ে সংক্রান্ত আইনের এই  
কএকনকা আমরা পক্ষান্তে প্রাপ্য হইবাহি এই  
কারণ ২১ অবধি ২৫ ধারাপর্যন্ত অত্র স্থলে  
প্রকাশ করিতে হইল, একারণ পাঠক নিকরকে  
ক্ষমা করিতে হইবেক।]

কুকুর লইয়া যাওয়ার খরচা।

২১। দশ মাইলের মূন না হয় এতদূর কুকুর  
লইয়া যাইতে হইলে ১০/ আনা খরচা দিতে হই-  
বেক এবং ততোধিক দূর লইয়া যাইতে হইলে  
তাহার খরচা নীচের লিখিতমত দিতে হইবেক।

উর্ধ্ব ১০ মাইল.	২০ মাইলের বেশি না হয়	১০/
২০	৪০	২০/
৪০	৬০	৩০/
৬০	৮০	৪০/
৮০	১০০	৫০/
১০০	১২০	৬০/
১২০	১৪০	৭০/

অতিরিক্ত পক্ষমাইলে ১০ টাকার হিসাবে রূপা দিতে হইবেক।

Figure 2.15

“Maitra,” writes Deep Kanta Lahiri Choudhury (2013), “was an unabashed champion of these machines of modernity. He saw the space and time contraction facilitated by railway and telegraphy as exemplars of modernity and civilisation and urged his compatriots to learn from the European attitude that time was money” (69).

While Maitra was more interested in the technological history of the steam engine and the railways in India, Umesh Chandra Nag’s *Octerlony Hoite Qutub Porjyonto* is a more recognisable format of the guidebook. Published in 1892, according to the Preface, it was a “response to the absence of Railway guides in Bengali at a time when more and more Bengalis were travelling across India” (Mukhopadhyay, 660, 2016).

Aparajita Mukhpadhyay notes that guidebooks written in Bangla were very often imitating their English counterparts with some additions and subtractions. For instance, guidebooks written by the British often contained a section on “What to Wear”, which was deemed redundant by authors in the vernacular (660).

Umesh Chandra Nag’s guidebook (1892) covers the following places – Buxar, Allahabad, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Vrindavan, Mathura, Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, and Chunar. From the information he provides on accommodation, we find that most places had Hindu Hotels and the proprietors would wait every day at the station to get hold of guests. He only mentions British hotels in case of Delhi – The United, Star, Northbrook, Great Western Hotel (105). He also mentions that in places like Allahabad and Agra, it is possible to rent an entire house (7, 22).

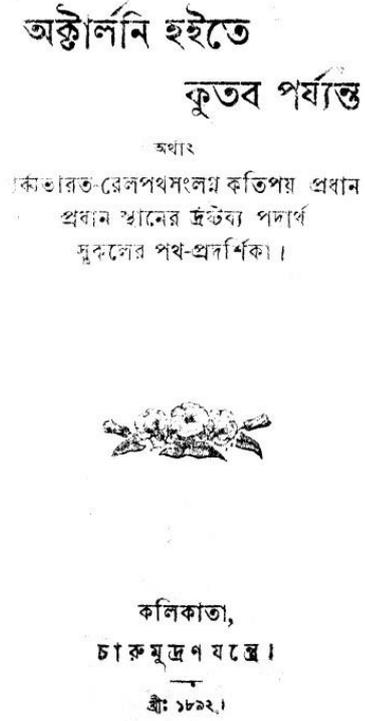


Figure 2.16

This work helps us identify the third major component in the culture of travel in the second half of the nineteenth century and one that continues to be a part of Indian travel culture today. I am referring here to the idea of travelling to ancient and historical sites of India. These tours were mostly limited to the northern part of India and rare are the instances of travelogues or guidebooks that describe journeys to the South. One of the reasons for this could be the fact that the ancient Hindu pilgrimage trail from Bengal traced its way across northern India. Kashi, for instance, had been a prominent destination among Bengali pilgrims and travellers for centuries before the advent of the railways. The more arduous trails to Kedarnath and Badrinath also took the pilgrim from Bengal to the north of the country. Of course, the other important reason behind the connection between the northwestern states and the eastern state of Bengal was their connectivity via the great river that flowed across most of them.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a number of factors contributed to these places making their way into the list of modern travel destinations. The connectivity of the railways and the development of a strand of nationalism that sought to reconstruct an ancient and glorious Indian past brought into focus the site of ancient ruins. On the one hand, when Indians (in this case specifically, the Bengalis) were telling the story of the past through these ancient ruins, they were reinscribing themselves into history. The British saw the ruins as a testament to India's decline. The Indians saw it as a repository of glory and a glory that could be revived. Most often, the retelling of this history also became an exercise on the part of the Hindu traveller or guide-book writer to create "their own 'others', most notably Indian Muslims, a process which had grave implications for the imagination of the nation" (Mukhopadhyay, 660–61).

In this context, it seems necessary to discuss in brief a travelogue published in the periodical *Nabanur* which began in 1903 and ran for four years. These are the travelogues that were published in *Nabanur*:

1. Imdad-ul-Haq's 'Du Diner Himalay Bhraman' (Year 1, Issue 1, 2, and 3)
2. Nagendra Chandra Dutta's 'Anguler Pathe' (Year 1, Jaishthya)
3. Atul Chandra Mukhopadhyay, 'Danton e Dui Din' (Year 1, Shraban and Bhadra)
4. Motiur Rahman's 'Prabaser Smriti' (Year 2 and 3)

Of these, this section will briefly discuss Motiur Rahman's travelogue. Based on his travels to the northern parts of India, Rahman's text primarily focuses on three places – Kurukhsetra, Delhi, and Agra. In the section on Kurukhsetra, Rahman writes, mentioning the battle between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, that this was the birthplace of the Hindu religion and also the site of its decline. In the vast expanse of the fictional battlefield, Rahman spots three hundred and fifty two Hindu temples. And, yet, he says, he cannot find any signs of the loot that was supposedly carried out in the Temple of Thaneshwar that the history textbooks mention (23–24).

Even from this brief account of Rahman's text, some important factors emerge; most significantly, the intersecting lines between history and memory, the reconstruction of the past and the construction of truth, and the agency and authority

of being able to write history and write oneself *into* history. When the travelogue becomes a vehicle of recovering lost national glory, it does so through the tool of memory, which is often used as a substitute or synonym for history. This will be elaborated upon in the chapter on travel writing.

Mukhopadhyay points out that in the European idea of leisure travel was embedded an idea of ‘utility’ which vernacular travel writers seemed to have borrowed. In this sense, travel was educational and could be used to either “complement or challenge textual knowledge” (662). Nowhere is this pedagogic nature of travel more emphasised than in travelogues for children.

Francis Bacon, in 1625, wrote, “Travel, in the younger sort, is a part of education, in the elder, a part of experience.” In the essay, “Of Travel”, Bacon goes on to enumerate how a young man should travel. He must have some idea of the language, says Bacon, and as his travel companion, he should have a servant or a tutor who knows the country well. Bacon advises that the young man should carry with him a text that provides a description of the country in which he is travelling and that the traveller himself should keep a diary. The traveller should not remain in one country or city for too long, and even within the same city, he should change his lodgings. If he finds good company, writes Bacon, he should sequester himself from his own countrymen and diet. In a new place, he should seek out a person of quality who will be able to provide him with information about that place.

Bacon’s essays were first into Bangla translated by Ramkamal Bhattacharya and published in 1861. Ramkamal translated sixteen essays which included the essay on travel. The text was probably meant for the students of the Calcutta Normal School, where Ramkamal was the headmaster. A second and complete translation of Bacon’s essays, translated by Dharmadas Adhikari, was published in 1874.<sup>30</sup>

In an essay published in the Bangla periodical *Dasi* in 1893, Ramananda Chattopadhyay, the founder and editor of the better-known periodical *Modern Review*, advances his theory of the ‘Historical Pilgrimage’, which is also the title of his essay. In the essay, he argues that the pilgrimage is the earliest form of travel in India, and that in this new day and age, it can be dissociated from its religious connotation and be transformed into a secular act that he calls the ‘historical pilgrimage’ (23). Such a

pilgrimage, he advances, will entail visiting historical sites across India as part of a vacation or with the exclusive purpose of doing so (school trips, for instance) in order to learn about the nation's past from these sites. He advocates the formation of small groups in schools with someone acting as a guide to the concerned site (23–26). He claims that going on pilgrimages in an earlier age was equivalent to a university education. He writes:

In the present day, travelling is practised by some educated peoples. But such travelling no longer bears the name of a pilgrimage but a change of air or something akin to that. The two are vastly different. A change of air or travelling for amusement is not reprehensible, but it lacks the greatness of a pilgrimage. [...] Then, what is to be done? The pilgrimage needs to be brought back (22).

Added to the quest for spirituality and an ascent to a higher moral plain, which was the project of earlier forms of pilgrimages, is the project of pedagogy, nationalism, and secularism. The intended receiver of this body of knowledge is almost always the child – whether at school or within the family. It is also intended for the uneducated masses who may have the means of travelling but not the means of acquiring education, and, in a sense, here, are located on the same plane as the child.

While it is not possible to argue with certainty that Ramananda had read Bacon's essays, either in English or in their Bangla translations, there is a similarity with Bacon in the way in which he uses travel as a pedagogic tool for the young learner.

This pedagogical aspect of travel, as this chapter has noted, is reflected in the travelogues written for children, especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the periodicals in which they were published were in the process of combining education with amusement, moving away from their solely pedagogic predecessors. As the new century begins, however, and the culture of travelling simply for leisure also begins to establish itself, we find it reflected more and more in travelogues written for children by the likes of Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri and others.

Travel writing for children occupies a peculiar position within the larger genre of travel writing. This is because, more often than not, the identity of the child as a traveller is inscribed in the future. The texts are supposed to encourage the child to take up travelling as they navigate the nation through the pages of the periodicals from the new leisure reading space of their mostly middle- and upper-class homes. In this sense, the child is expected to imagine the nation, even as the nation is imagined and inscribed within the pages of the periodical, often explicitly, often in subtler undertones. The place of the journey becomes the space of the nation.

The next chapter will discuss travelogues for children published in select Bangla juvenile periodicals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> The Bengali, here, refers specifically to the Bengali man, and the idea that he is perfectly pleased to be sitting at home instead of venturing out into the world derives in part from the colonial construct of the colonised man as ‘effeminate’, which has been previously discussed. An oft-quoted poem, in this context, is Rabindranath’s ‘Duranta Asha’, especially the description of the Bengali as a creature “fed on milk and rice”, incapable of feeling rage at his shackled state.

<sup>2</sup> Specified because juvenile periodicals in particular published articles about distant lands and peoples to which the author had not actually travelled.

<sup>3</sup> Travelling to a foreign land across the seas was also deemed ‘impure’.

<sup>4</sup> See Simonti Sen’s discussion of the sea voyage in *Travels to Europe: Self and Other in Bengali Travel Narratives 1870–1910*, 2005; See also, *The Hindu Sea Voyage Movement in Bengal*, published by the Standing Committee on the Hindu Sea Voyage Question in 1894.

<sup>5</sup> And, after all, the train could not cross the ocean.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, Raziuddin Aqil and Tilottama Mukherjee, edited, *An Earthly Paradise: Trade, Politics and Culture in Early Modern Bengal*, 2020; Sushil Chaudhury, *Companies, Commerce and Merchants: Bengal in the Pre-Colonial Era*, 2017; Ranabir Chakravarti, *Trade and Traders in Early Indian Society*, 2021; Baijayanti Chatterjee, “Transport, Mobility and Mobile Groups in Bengal: Deconstructing Colonial Myths of Movement and Migration in the Eighteenth Century”, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> I am referring to the version of the text edited by Sukumar Sen.

<sup>8</sup> It is not within the scope of the present work to discuss the culture of pilgrimage travel in Bengal. For a brief but succinct overview of the Hindu pilgrim culture and narratives, Shekhar Bhowmik’s Introduction in the reprint of Jadunath Sarbadhikari’s *Tirtha Bhraman* is a useful source. Rajyeshwar Sinha’s essay has been cited in the discussion of *Tirthamangal*. For scholarly essays and reprints of pilgrim narratives, see the special issue of *Sampan*, January 2002. This volume also contains a list of books pertaining to travel (till 1900) in the collection of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad. See also, *Bitarkika*’s special issue on travel, February 2000.

---

<sup>9</sup> Page numbers to the Introduction written by Barid Baran Ghosh (2009) are not available.

<sup>10</sup> David. L. Curley, “Styles of mastery of a Calcutta Brahman family: Krishnachandra Ghoshal’s pilgrimage to Gaya, Kashi and Prayag, 1769, in Vijayram Sen’s *Tirthamangala*” (2020).

<sup>11</sup> Narahari Chakrabarti’s *Braja Parikrama* and *Nabadwip Parikrama* were published by Bangiya Sahitya Parishad in 1905 and 1909 respectively. The latter was published in two volumes.

<sup>12</sup> This edition does not have page numbers for the Introduction.

<sup>13</sup> *Tirtha Bhraman* has been included in this discussion because of the great historical moment its author bears witness to, but more specific to the culture of travel, Jadunath sets out in 1853 – the same year the railways were established in Bengal. Finances, however, prevent him from accessing this new mode of transport. Nevertheless, his travelogue, based on his four-year long travels, is located at an important moment in time both in terms of travel and nationalism. It is also important as an early instance of the use of the form of the diary in travel writing – a form that will be used extensively in later years. Nagendranath Basu claims that through Sarbadhikari’s text, the notion that the form of the diary or the journal is a result of English influence can now be discarded.

<sup>14</sup> Jayati Gupta, “Interstices: Travel, History, Text”, 2021.

<sup>15</sup> A discussion of Gupta’s letters is included here as an example of an early form of secular travel writing after the coming of the railways in Bengal. The epistolary form is also worth noting. Besides the journal, letter-writing would also emerge as a popular form of travel writing in the later decades of the nineteenth century. I am using an edited compilation of the articles (Dutta and Das, 2018). For a discussion of the letters, see Kamal Kumar Dutta, “Ishwar Chandra Gupter Bhramankatha: ‘Bhramankari Bondhur Patra’”, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/hind\\_swaraj.pdf](https://www.mkgandhi.org/ebks/hind_swaraj.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> This is a vast area of work and has received significant attention in both Bangla and English. The manifold impact of the railways means it has been discussed in several contexts, including – literature, culture, society, economics, nationalism and nationhood, and science and technology – among others. There are also nineteenth and early twentieth century tracts on the railways and railway travel, articles published in numerous Bangla periodicals (juvenile or otherwise), railway advertisements, and time tables – all of which make for an interesting study. Recent works include Arup. K. Chatterjee’s *The Purveyors of Destiny: A*

---

*Cultural Biography of the Indian Railways*, 2017, and Aparajita Mukhopadhyay's *Imperial Technology and 'Native' Agency: A Social History of Railways in Colonial India, 1850–1920*, 2018. Seminal work in the field has been done by Ian. J. Kerr. See Bibliography for a list of his works. See also, Michael Satow and Ray Desmond, edited, *Railways of the Raj*, 1980.

<sup>18</sup> Abhjit Gupta, “Raising Steam”, <https://www.bl.uk/early-indian-printed-books/articles/raising-steam>.

<sup>19</sup> For more on the allusion to railways in literature, see the chapter “Rail Sahitya” in Arindam Chakrabarti's *Railgari: Bashpiya Rath theke Metro*”, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> Kartik 1320 BS.

<sup>21</sup>Page numbers not available.

<sup>22</sup> Page numbers not available.

<sup>23</sup> It is not within the scope of this chapter to discuss the political and economic importance of Darjeeling as a British colonial outpost. This, however, is crucial in understanding the history of Darjeeling and the marginalization and invisibilisation of its original inhabitants in the discourse of the colonisers as well as the Bengali middle class.

<sup>24</sup> Possibly the house later owned by Chittaranjan Das.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.windamerehotel.com/memories-of-the-british-raj>

<sup>26</sup> In Rajshekhar Basu's “Kochi Sangsad”, the narrator's wife convinces him that the puja holidays must be spent vacationing in Darjeeling, because, she reasons, “In Darjeeling, we'll meet people we know. Tuni didi, her sister-in-law – they are all there. Sarojini, Suku mashi have gone there as well. As has Monky Mittir's wife and their thirteen children.” *Kajjali*, 1985.

<sup>27</sup> See also, Stella Chitralekha Biswas's essay in *Café Dissensus* – <https://cafedissensus.com/2020/10/23/the-travels-and-travails-of-a-bengali-reading-sanjib-chandra-chattopadhyays-palamau/>.

<sup>28</sup> See, Subho Basu, “The Dialectics of Resistance: Colonial Geography, Bengali Literati and the Racial Mapping of Indian Identity”, 2010.

---

<sup>29</sup> There seems to be a gap in scholarly focus in this area. Essays I have found mostly refer to *Palamau* or to a later work such as Satyajit Ray's *Aranyer Din Ratri*, itself an adaptation of Sunil Gangopadhyay's Bangla novel of the same name.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/early-indian-printed-books/articles/ramkamals-translation-of-francis-bacons-essays>

## Chapter 3

### Historical Landscape

*The early story of Bharat and the glorious achievements of the Aryans is not just a legend, it inheres in the lofty heights from the Vindhya to the Himalayas, it is continuously lamented by the sad strains of the Ganga, Yamuna and Sarayu, it exists to this day as memories amidst the ruins of the past in Ayodhya, Hastina, and Indraprastha that we saw; we can mourn the loss of that sacred land, that noble glory, but we cannot think of it as an imaginary illusion, a mere fictional saga.*

- Prasannamoyee Debi, Preface to  
*Aryavarta*<sup>1</sup>

The term 'landscape' conjures up the image of a framed work of art – scenes of mountains, rivers, trees, and vast fields in which the human figure is mostly absent. As a form of art, the landscape is peculiar, for it is both the subject and the form – that which is represented and the final production. This sense of duality is carried into the idea of a literal landscape – the kind of landscapes that literature is able to produce through words. Travel writing, by the very nature of its genre, is able to produce and represent a varied assortment of landscapes, depending often on the mode of transport. The view and subsequent landscape from a fast-moving train would be different from the one produced from a slow-moving boat. Whether the traveller is walking or stationary would also play a part in the (re)production of the landscape before them.

In all these senses of the landscape, as a form and a process, as the object and the subject, the common, central concern is human relationship between human and nature. As Denis Cosgrove (1984) points out, “[...] landscape is an ideological

concept which represents the way in which certain class of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature” (15).

Thinking of landscape as an ideology becomes significant in the colonial context. Land becomes a fraught word. What is the relationship of the colonised to their land? How are questions of ownership mitigated within a colonial context? What kind of connotations does the term ‘land’ carry within it, especially in a colonised nation? And, finally, if the landscape is a construction or a production, then who produces and reproduces these landscapes?

Borrowing W. J. T. Mitchell’s theorization (2002), we can think of this ‘landscape’ not only as an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as a process by which social and subjective identities are formed. Landscape, in this sense, becomes an instrument of cultural power, perhaps, as Mitchell argues, even an *agent* of cultural power that is independent of human intentions. Landscape “greet us as space”, says Mitchell, “as environment”, as something within which “we [...] find—or lose—ourselves” (2). Landscape is the *mode* of production, but also that which is produced. Mitchell argues that it is a “physical and multi-sensory medium” [...] in which cultural meanings and values are encoded” (14). And most significantly, according to Mitchell, it is the process that may result in the formation of cultural and individual identities.

“The history, discourse, and practice of travel offer a new paradigm for considering visual culture, especially landscape imagery,” writes Quilley (2012) and as Mitchell and others have pointed out, the rise of landscape painting in European art from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries takes place parallelly to the growth of “global travel and tourism, geographical exploration and knowledge, and colonial and imperial expansion” (Quilley, 2012).<sup>2</sup>

This chapter and the next will discuss and analyse landscape as produced by travel writing for children, published in Bangla juvenile periodicals under consideration in this work. Primarily, two kinds of landscapes will be discussed – the historical landscape and the natural landscape. These are the two types that recur in travel texts, not just in juvenile periodicals, but also in travelogues written for adults. This chapter will pay close attention to the historical landscape, keeping in mind the

context of colonisation, and the attempt of the colonised to reclaim, recover, and rediscover their past, within the broader framework of landscape as an ideology.

### **Architecture, Archaeology, and Landscape**

Sabyasachi Bhattacharya (2011) points out that towards the end of the nineteenth century, a civilisational discourse emerges among the Indian intelligentsia in the project of ‘talking back’ to the Empire. This discourse, he argues, runs parallel to the course of a developing nationalism. This civilisational discourse was developed, not by professional historians, but by nationalist public spokesmen with the twin aim of refuting the disparaging of Indian history by colonial historians and asserting a civilisational unity of India, irrespective of whether it truly existed in the past. Bhattacharya writes:

History is a colonial evil which originated in India’s discovery of the temporality of the world. The exit from the sacred timelessness created a vacuum. A sacred, eternal India was needed to fill up that vacuum. This psychological need was met by the discourse of civilization. It was immaterial whether such an India existed in the past, it was a necessity in the present times (Introduction, 5–6).

The travelogue becomes a suitable carrier and disseminator of this civilisational unity. The travelogue emerges as a popular form of writing simultaneous to and as a result of the new modernity of colonial Bengal, and in the hands of the Bengali Hindu middle class, it becomes a carrier of the emerging ideas of nationalism, and a tool of constructing the Self and the Other. The kind of historical landscape that the travelogue produces is peculiar to the genre because of the different temporalities and spatial presences it contains. To elucidate, the travelogue, even if it is written once the journey has been completed, creates a sense of immediacy in a temporal sense of being present at the spot (this is a point to which this thesis shall return in discussing the idea of the picturesque natural landscape). The landscape that is being described also contains a dual sense of temporality. On the one hand, it harks back to

the supposedly glorious past, and on the other, it (re)produces its present ruined state. The author, too, then, has one foot in the past and one in the present in the process of (re)producing the landscape. The travelogue also invites the reader, sitting presumably at home, to be embark on this journey. There is a sense of duality in the journey as well – the present-day journey to a site of the past.

The presence of the traveller on the actual ancient site often endows him (and occasionally her) with the quality of the historian. An eye-witness account of historical sites is supposed to make the narrative of history more believable. The past acts as the source of (lost) glory; the present cements that as truth by producing a spatial immediacy. The travelogue becomes, seemingly, a map of the past, constructed in the present, and in case of the juvenile reader, one that is to be traced in the future. This chapter will discuss the critical issue of the gaze of the traveller and how fault-lines of class, caste, religious, and gender intersect in forming this gaze.

In order to create a ‘civilisational discourse’ for the nation, the first step would be to gather knowledge about this civilisation through what remains of it. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Bengali intelligentsia (to be understood as primarily male, Hindu, upper/middle class, and upper caste, unless otherwise stated) begin to ‘talk back’, what did they find waiting for them? What kind of discourse did they need to oppose?

Between 1835 and 1842, James Fergusson, a historian of architecture and an occasional architect himself, embarked upon a journey across India. His primary purpose was ‘discovering’ various parts of the country and collecting information about these places. His second purpose was to examine the various specimens of ancient Indian architecture. In 1848, back in London, he composed the *Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan* based on his travels. His use of the term ‘picturesque’ in the title of his work reminds the reader immediately of the tendencies of European art in general and British landscape painting in particular that began in the eighteenth century and continued well into the nineteenth in the hands of artists such as William Hodges.<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting here that in their departure from and expansion of Gilpin’s ideas of the picturesque (which will be elaborated upon at a later point in this thesis), Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight brought into the folds of the discourse more prominently the element of architecture and especially the

painting of ruins within a landscape. Tillotson (2000) explains that ruins would “mark a disruption not just of straight lines, but of the metaphorical line between architecture and landscape” – that is to say, while, following the picturesque mode, the natural would be re-arranged in an artificial manner, the artificial itself, in this case the ruins, would be made to look more “natural” (23).

Through his illustrations, Fergusson has also attempted to represent the history of India, claiming that his representations are ‘genuine’ and ‘perfect’. Thus, it follows from Fergusson’s own argument, that the purpose of his journey was not merely an exploration of Indian art and aesthetics, but also a project of accumulation and through the final production of his work, dissemination of knowledge about India which he held to be true. Tapati Guha Thakurta (2004) writes:

British civilians and officers who took up the cause of retrieving India’s “lost” history from the ancient ruins and monuments that pervaded the terrain [...] also saw themselves as conferring order and system on the modes of studying and interpreting their structural remains (3).<sup>4</sup>

Following Guha Thakurta, this thesis will now turn its attention to another British traveller to India who retraced the journey of Huyen Tsang and Fa Hien in visiting Indian historical sites. This British traveller—Alexander Cunningham—was the founder of the Archaeological Survey of India. Trained as an engineer, Cunningham arrived in India in 1833 as an officer of the Bengal Engineers Regiment, retiring in 1861. He was associated with a number of excavations in India including, most famously, the sites of Sarnath and Sanchi. Cunningham wrote a number of books about these historical sites, including one entitled *The Ancient Geography of India* (1871), and while the title mentions only ‘geography’, history also played a key role in Cunningham’s text. Following Cunningham’s career as an archaeologist allows us to turn our attention to excavation of historical sites in India in the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

In tracing the development of archaeological research in the subcontinent from its earliest days to the post-Independence era, Dilip. K. Chakrabarti (2010) begins in the early sixteenth century, when, he says, there were primarily three groups of people

who were carrying out this task and principally two categories of monuments under consideration.<sup>6</sup> The groups consist of the “Portuguese residents of Goa, other European sailors and occasional travellers” (4) and the monuments are “the rock-cut caves of west India and the south Indian temples” (4). Chakrabarti writes that by the mid-eighteenth century, the Europeans were quite familiar with Indian monuments (4).

For the more formal beginnings of Indian archaeology, one must turn to the mid-eighteenth century, opines Chakrabarti, which also marks the beginning of academic interest in the Indian antiquities. Chakrabarti reminds us that there had been visitors from the Mediterranean lands to India from the time of classical antiquity and some of these visitors also wrote texts about India that have survived mostly as fragments. But, continuing from and expanding upon his previous argument about the familiarity of Europeans with Indian monuments, Chakrabarti writes that “the memory of India [...] was never lost from the European mind” and “around the middle of the eighteenth century the old classical references to Indian cities were being remembered and sought to be understood in modern terms” (4–5). One of the significant moments in the study of Indian classical antiquities was the establishment of the Asiatic Society in 1784, although, contrary to popular belief, writes Chakrabarti, the formation of the Society did not, in fact, mark the initiation of archaeological research in India; rather, it acted as a kind of catalyst. By this time, Chakrabarti argues, it had become clear that Britain’s power in India was on the rise, and consequently, “from the administrative and economic point of view, there was a great need to know systematically about the country they were to rule” (5).

A significant advancement in field research began with James Prinsep assuming the post of the Secretary of the Asiatic Society in the early 1830s. The period from 1830s onwards witnessed a number of excavations including the “discovery” of Buddhist stupas (7). The contribution of Cunningham is significant in this period. Chakrabarti notes that Cunningham “did not undertake detailed excavations” but in his reconstruction of the “ancient historical geography of India,” he “peopled it with actual sites and monuments” (9). Cunningham’s methodology, travelling across the length and breadth of the country and writing down the details of

historical sites, he himself said, would be “an undertaking of vast importance to the Indian government politically...” (8).

While tracing the history of the development of archaeological study in India, Chakrabarti notes, however, that the “sense of the Indian past in the nineteenth century and later was conditioned not so much by archaeological discoveries [...], but by textual scholarship” (10). It is worth noting, nevertheless, that in the development of travel in the nineteenth century, especially post the emergence of the railways, historical sites feature prominently and specifically in travelogues written for children; they perform a pedagogic function within the text while often also performing the task of the recovery of a glorious Indian past that is predominantly Hindu. In other instances, as we shall see, ancient historical sites become proof of the religious harmony that existed in India; in still others, the co-existence of different kinds of architecture in the same site becomes an analysis of the relationship between religion and political power.

It is also worth noting that some of these travel texts praise the conservation efforts of the British. Chakrabarti, however, paints a different picture. He points out that these were only “brief and generally half-hearted attempts” (13). He further notes, “The special post of a Curator of Ancient Monuments was no doubt created in 1880, but that lasted only for three years, after which the responsibility of the conservation passed on to the provincial governments who, in turn, passed it on to their Public Works Department. [...] there was no policy of systematically excavating ancient historical settlements. Whatever excavations had taken place were haphazardly done and were only of marginal significance” (13). This attitude began to change in the period of Lord Curzon’s tenure as the Viceroy and “what he planned and achieved was a centralized government direction for archaeology in India in each of its hitherto recognized branches – conservation, exploration, excavation and epigraphy” (13).

It must be remembered that “virtually all early western scholar-administrators in India had their native ‘pundits’, i.e., the traditional scholars of the land” and that “in the second half of the nineteenth century, several Indians became prominent in the field of Indology” (10). One such man was Babu Rajendralal Mitra.<sup>7</sup>

Rajendralal Mitra, along with his assistant Ramanath Tarkalankar, travelled across Bengal and Orissa, observing and recording the temple architecture. Mitra later wrote a book on Orissa's temples. One of the aims of Rajendralal's project was to rescue history from erroneous facts. In fact, he engaged in a written debate with Fergusson on this issue. Rajendralal's primary accusation against Fergusson was the latter's claim that there had been no architecture in India using carvings on stone prior to the emperor Asoka. He argued that the lack of evidence does not suggest a lack of existence. Rather, the lack of evidence may have several causes, primary of which is the Muslim invasion of India. Fergusson argued that the problem was not with a particular author but lay at the very foundation of 'native' knowledge which was based on memory rather than scientific enquiry.<sup>8</sup> In this context, we must remember that the travelogue, too, by nature, is mostly a work of recollection, based on the memory of the traveller, only written once the journey has come to a physical end.

### **The History of the Hunt**

The projects and endeavours of both Fergusson and Cunningham can be read (as Guha Thakurta has done) within the context of the encyclopaedic imperial zeal of imposing order and system and also within the structure of a system of knowledge that came about as a result of colonial modernity. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's oft-quoted remark about the British would be useful to recall in this context. He wrote, "Even when the English go out to hunt birds, they make sure to note it down" (1985 Reprint, 330).

In another essay, Bankim will write, "Bengal has no history, and without it, Bengal has no hope. Who shall write? You shall write, I shall write, everyone shall write. Whosoever is a Bengalee must write" (337). Who is Bankim's "Bengalee"? Certainly, the generic term is fraught with Bankim's own politics, one that restricts the definition, albeit unspoken, to a male, Hindu author of history.<sup>9</sup>

Partha Chatterjee (2000) further points out that Bankim's lamentations about the lack of a history of the Bengali was not entirely true (132). In fact, Bankim himself has noted the existence of a number of history books but complained that none of them contained the true history of the Bengalis and that not enough Bengalis

were writing history. This ‘true’ history, explains Chatterjee, was, according to Bankim, the past glory of the race (132). Ranajit Guha (1997) also notes that, “To insist on self-representation, if only in terms of its past, was, therefore, for such a people already a signal of its impatience with the state of subjection. Considered thus, the urge for an autonomous historiography could be understood as the symptom it really was of an urgent, insistent, though incipient nationalism” (201).

The historical memory that Bankim rues is woefully absent in the mind of the Bengali is not an ‘indigenous’ sense of history but based on a European model of linearity.<sup>10</sup> This linear sense of history began with a Golden Classical Age from which one is thrown into the darkness of the Middle Ages to the present day. In the Indian context (and one of the changes that occurs in the second half of the nineteenth century in history writing is a shift from writing about the history of *kings* to the history of a race which can interchangeably be referred to as Indians, Bengalis, or Aryans), ancient India became the repository of past glory and the period of Muslim Rule came to represent the so-called Dark Age (154). “The remembrance of things past in a people’s life and the urge for a people’s own historiography,” writes Ranajit Guha (1997), “have [...] one thing in common. Both are informed by a notion of the Other” (154). For the Hindu history-writers in the second half of the nineteenth century in Bengal, and for Bankim, this Other was most often the Muslim.

Chatterjee alerts us to the vast array of history books that were published in and around the time Bankim is writing his essay and notes that while Bankim dismisses them as ‘juvenile’, they displayed this same sense of history and, in fact, had a wide readership (132–33). Many of these were textbooks for children.

It is not within the scope of the present work to delve into a deeper analysis of the history textbooks written in the second half of the nineteenth century by (mostly Hindu) Bengalis. Rather, the purpose here is to see how a nascent nationalism found expression through the binary of the Self and the Other (where the Other was the Muslim) and how a new way of reading and writing about history was emerging in colonial Bengal as a result of the colonial encounter. This study of textbooks will help us in understanding the wider context within which we can read the historical landscapes (re)produced in travel writing for children. In this section, we turn our

attention to two textbooks – Tarinicharan Chattopadhyay’s *Bharatbarsher Itihas* and Rajkrishna Mukhopadhyay’s *Banglar Itihas*.

Rajkrishna Mukhopadhyay’s *Banglar Itihas* (reviewed by Bakim Chandra Chattopadhyay in his essay of the same name) was first published in 1874. In this section, I am referring to the fourteenth edition of the work, published in 1879. That the text ran into fourteen editions in five years is indicative of its popularity and success.

Mukhopadhyay begins with defining Subah Bengal—geographically and politically—as the regions under the rule of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal (3). He then moves on to describe the region’s physical and political geography. In introducing the six main divisions of Bengal, Mukhopadhyay does not forget to mention sites of ancient ruin denoting past glory and it slowly becomes clear why Bankim approved of his text. He writes, “In the division of Bardhaman are the ruins of Saptagram – the main port during Hindu and Muslim rule. [...] In the Rajshahi division, there are ruins of the ancient city of Gaur. In the Dhaka division, there are ruins of the ancient capital of eastern Bengal – Subarnagram” (4).

Yet, what received more explicit approval from Bankim was his account of Muslim rule in Bengal in which he dispels the idea that the entire region had been conquered by the ‘invaders’. Mukhopadhyay writes:

In this land, Pathans hoisted the victory flag of Islam. After 372 years of their rule, perhaps the time has come to assess how far they had conquered this part of the world. To the west, they had not managed to gain control of Bishnupur and Panchakot; to the south, there were independent Hindu kings in the areas near the Sunderbans; to the east – Chattergram, Noakhali, and Tripura were controlled by the King of Arakan and the King of Tripura; and to the north, Coochbehar had retained its autonomous status (37).

The eighteenth edition of Tarinicharan Chattopadhyay’s *Bharatbarsher Itihas* was published in 1878. He had also written geography textbooks (Chatterjee, 150–51). I am using the twenty-third edition of the first volume, published in 1888.

In the second chapter, Tarinicharan establishes Ram as a historical figure as a king of the Surya dynasty whose seat was Ayodhya. It is worth noting, however, that while Tarinicharan uses *Ramayana* as a source, he also admits that Balmiki's epic is also made up of folklores. Soon after, Tarinicharan mentions the Battle of Kurukhsetra as the next important event in India (6–7). In the travelogues in which the author journeys to places such as Ayodhya, Lucknow, and, in some cases, even Delhi, we will see how the epics are invoked and used as historical sources to supplement the ruins or, in certain instances, the lack thereof.

Tarinicharan also alludes to the idea of the Classical Age and he specifically refers to the physical prowess of the Aryans. "Foreign travellers who visited India," he writes, "were pleased and amazed by the Aryans' courage, innocence, and commitment to their word. Nowadays, the absence of these very qualities in the Hindu is highlighted" (32).

Referring to the prohibition on sea voyages, Tarinicharan writes, "In those days, the ships of the Hindus would sail frequently to islands such as Sumatra [...] and now, the very mention of a sea voyage makes them faint-hearted and if anyone does embark on a voyage, they are ostracised upon return" (32).

Rajkrishna Mukhopadhyay, in his work, shares the story of a king named Sinhabahu – an Aryan who ruled over Bengal and had sailed to and conquered Sinhala. The very name derives from the name of his dynasty – Sinha. Rajkrishna's conclusion, therefore, is that "five hundred years before the birth of Christ, the Aryans had gained control of Bengal and just like the English today, had embarked on sea voyages to conquer foreign lands" (9–10). His conclusion is certainly interesting when read within the emerging nationalist discourse.

Tarinicharan also argues that in this Golden Age, Hindu women enjoyed more freedom. Their condition then was not like the Hindu women of today who are used as though they are slaves, confined as though they are prisoners, and illiterate as though they are base creatures. In that Golden Age, women were respected, educated, and possessed more freedom of mobility (33). Tarinicharan's comment must be read within the larger context of reform movements and how the figure of the woman and

the home became a site where the tensions between tradition and modernity played themselves out in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In outlining the history of Muslim rule in India, Tarinicharan begins his account with Muhammad (33). He tries to provide, thus, a wider context which includes the history of the rise of Islam itself and at the same time, is able to seal the identity of the Muslims as outsiders to India (Chatterjee, 155). Moreover, Chatterjee notes, this history-writer also contributes to the characterisation of Muslims (male) as a race that is not merely violent, but one that revels in violence, a race that believes in the extermination of all those it considers heathen; a greedy and lustful people – ready to lay down their lives in the battlefield for an afterlife filled with riches and houries (155).

In the next section, this thesis looks at the travelogues to see how the prevalent ideas in history textbooks find their way into the leisure reading of children at home, keeping in mind the broader context of the relationship between travel, nationalism, and empire.

## **Travelogues**

Religion, mythology, and history appear in these travel texts for children in all their fraught relational glory, most often blurring the lines that should, ideally, separate them. *Sakha*, *Balak*, and *Mukul* are the periodicals this section will focus on and it will particularly focus on the travelogues of Abala Basu which were published in *Mukul*. This is because Abala Basu was not only well-travelled—in India and abroad—but also because she is one of the few authors who wrote multiple travelogues for children. She also stands out as one of the few female voices in a domain that otherwise appears to be dominated by male authors.

Abala Basu was born in Barishal (modern day Bangladesh) in 1864. Her father was the social reformer Durgamohan Das and her mother was Brahmamoyee Debi. Her life as a student began at the Brahma Balika Vidyalay in Calcutta and she was subsequently enrolled at Bethune School from where she passed the Entrance Examination (the final school-leaving examination) in 1881, and went to Madras that

same year to study medicine. She had to go to Madras because the Medical College in Calcutta did not, at that time, permit women to enrol in their courses. Abala Basu would probably have been the first female doctor of India had she been able to complete her studies, but poor health forced her to quit, and after two years she returned to Kolkata. Although she had not completed her degree, the Madras Medical College awarded her with a Certificate of Honour. In 1887, at the age of 23, she married the scientist Jagadish Chandra Bose.<sup>11</sup> She accompanied him on many of his travels both in India and abroad, and the travelogues which are the subject of this chapter were presumably written during such travels.

This section focuses specifically on Abala Basu's travels to various places within India, with the intention of understanding how the familiar landscapes of these oft-visited locales acquire new dimensions, if at all, when it is meant for a juvenile readership. This section will try to situate Abala Basu's travel writing within the broad context of the development of both travel and travel writing in Bengal in the second half of the nineteenth century and intends to elucidate upon how the geographical present interacts and intersects with the historical past to produce a politically-charged landscape of the nation for the child, while performing the task of disseminating knowledge, and constructing the identity of the child. It is within this framework that this section will now look closely at four of Abala Basu's travelogues.

The four travelogues that this chapter intends to discuss are based on the author's travels to Kashmir, Lucknow, Chittore, and Madras. All four were published in *Mukul*. In the same periodical, she also published travelogues based on her travels to America – “Americar Balakbalikader Katha” [The Tale of American Boys and Girls] which was published in 1909, and “Japan Bhraman” [Travels in Japan], based on her travels to Japan, which was published in 1915. She also published travelogues based on her travels to England (1897) and Italy (1895–96).

In its first five years, the period in which Shibnath Shastri was the editor, at least twelve travelogues were published in *Mukul*. Of these, ten are by Abala Basu. The two other travelogues are by men. This ratio is certainly an exception. The travelogues are:

1. Kashmir – Abala Basu [Part I, Issue 6 and 7, Agrahayan–Poush, 1302 BS/1895]
2. Lucknow – Abala Basu [Part I, Issue 9, Poush–Falgun, 1302 BS/1895]
3. Madras Bhraman [Travels in Madras] – Abala Basu [Part I, Issue 10, Chaitra, 1302 BS/1895]
4. Elephanta Gahbar [Elephanta Caves] – Umeshchandra Nag [Part I, Issue 8, Magh, 1302 BS/1895]
5. Orissa – Ramesh Chunder Dutt [Part I, Issue 2, Shraban, 1302 BS/1895]
6. Chittore Darshan [Seeing Chittore] – Abala Basu [Part 2, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1303 BS/1896]
7. Londoner Golpo [Tales of London] – Abala Basu [Part III, Issue 11, Falgun, 1304 BS/1897]
8. Westminster Abbey – Abala Basu [Part III, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1304 BS/1897]
9. Parliament Darshan [Seeing the Parliament] – Abala Basu [Part III, Issue 10, Magh, 1304 BS/1897]
10. Agneyagiri Darshan [Seeing a Volcano] – Abala Basu [Part IV, Issue 3, Asharh 1305 BS/1898]
11. Lupta Nagari [The Extinct City] – Abala Basu [Part IV, Issue 4, Shraban, 1305 BS/1898]
12. Venice – Abala Basu [Part V, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1306 BS/1899]

In these travelogues, Abala Basu constructs travel as educational rather than a life-experience. She addresses her readers directly, and often in a tone that is instructive, creating an imaginary classroom in which she is conducting a history or geography lesson.

She begins the travelogue on Kashmir by stating that they had gone to Kashmir during the puja holidays. She then goes on to explain why she has written about her travels, which could then be applicable to the other travelogues under consideration as well, since it is not particular to Kashmir:

The accounts of our travels have been given here in brief to evoke the curiosity of those among you who love reading travelogues. In civilised countries such as England, boys and girls love reading travelogues from a very young age, which has a positive effect – when they grow up, they are ready to sacrifice even their lives to discover a new country (from Basu, 2015, 31).

She then goes on to cite the examples of Sir John Franklin, David Livingstone, and Fridtjof Nansen as epitomes of such ‘discoverers’ (31).

It is interesting to note that in this first section, she mentions that not only do British children grow up to become adventurers and explorers, but that this zeal is invoked in them early on in their lives through their love for reading travelogues. The travelogues would play a vital role in instilling so-called heroic and masculine characteristics in the children of the Empire – essential qualities in those whose futures would ideally be dedicated to the cause of the imperialist enterprise. There are, from the very beginning of Abala Basu’s ‘Kashmir’, a number of binaries that begin to appear, sometimes quite directly at the level of the text, and sometimes lurking beneath the surface. At the level of the text, Abala Basu sets up the binary of the civilised and the uncivilised – the Empire the former and the colony the latter. Reading about travel, and, by extension, travel itself, are civilised acts performed by the British children, significantly, both boys and girls, and it is through what seems like a mimicry of these actions in part that the children of the colony too can claim a place for themselves in the civilised world. The second binary she sets up is that between the children of the two nations, and it appears that one can only be the sad imitation. The children of England, inspired by travel writing, are ready to lay down their lives for the discovery of a new land. But such discoveries, it seems, will forever be outside the grasp of the children of the colonies. Here, we see Abala Basu referring to a third kind of travelling—one entrenched in imperialist enterprise and vocabulary—European voyages undertaken with the explicit purpose of ‘discovery’.

From the list, we can see that Abala Basu published three travelogues based on her visit to London in *Mukul* – “London-er Golpo”, “Parliament Darshan”, and “Westminster Abbey”. These could be considered as three parts of a singular travelogue as well.

In “Tales of London”, she writes, “Alighting from the ship and climbing onto the station, I saw that we had arrived in *another world*” [emphasis mine] (66).<sup>12</sup> Travelogues written in Bengali, as this work will note, often described the destination as *bidesh* – literally translating to ‘foreign land’ even if the place was within the country. While this will be discussed in detail elsewhere in the present work, I would like to point out that Abala Basu’s exclamation here is worth noting and certainly must be read within the wider context of the colony gazing upon the Empire. What was this world like?

In her travelogues, this other world is sanitised and civilised. Work is performed here like clockwork, without any hustle or bustle. In “London er Golpo” she writes:

Immediately upon coming aboard, we witnessed many examples of the British sense of discipline and their skill. [...] Seven hundred passengers on board, yet everything – taking showers, lunch – is running smoothly and on time (65).

Such descriptions, which appear quite frequently in her writing, are rarely set up in terms of binaries, suggesting, in a sense, that the description of the Empire does not require a language of comparison, but is self-sufficient in its glory. In “London er Golpo,” there is one allusion to India couched in comparative terms, “Unlike the stations in our country, there is no chaos and shouting and screaming here” (66). But in the rest of the travelogue, she describes London—its streets, traffic, subway, shops, animals, and gardens—without referring to her own country. “Westminster Abbey” and “Parliament Darshan” are about visiting specific sites, so the allusion to India is not expected. It is also worth noting that history is never a part of the London landscape that Abala Basu creates. It makes a brief appearance in “Westminster Abbey” – “The Westminster Abbey we see today used to be a small place of worship. History says that the present Abbey was built at the time of the British king Edward the Confessor,” she writes (78). But for the most part, the history lesson takes a back seat.

There is a second point to note about the sites she chooses to describe in her travelogue on London. Westminster Abbey and the Parliament are both seats of power

– one ecclesiastical and the other secular. The Parliament, moreover, is also the seat from which the British Empire is formally governed. Thus, these two sites are not mere buildings, but important tools in the creation and consolidation of the Empire. As readers, it is interesting to see how a woman from the colony is, literally and metaphorically, gazing upon and interacting with these spaces.

It is possible to argue that there is a clear difference of intent, and therefore, tone, in Abala Basu's travelogues about England and the ones about her travels around India. In case of the latter, the comparisons become imperative in the attempt, on the one hand, to glorify colonial rule, and on the other, to denigrate Muslim rule in India. The (colonial) modernity that produces her gives her the means to venture out of the home – to visit places in her own country and beyond. But it is this same modernity which imprisons her, specifically in the realm of language. Her vocabulary, in her travelogues about India, seems to be reproducing the popular British representation of India, following in their footsteps in *inventing* the 'East', rather than *discovering* it.

Returning to her writings based on her travels around India, we can see that Abala Basu is reproducing the imperialist tropes that described the Bengali man – weak, effeminate, and juvenile. Such a man, then, is not fit for an adventure. And certainly, as this thesis has already noted, for self-governance. Relegating the subject to this state of infancy—of culture, development, and intellect—justified the creation of a system whereby the colonised race would be educated and civilised in the imitation of the Empire, but never truly be equal to it. When Abala Basu begins her travelogue on Kashmir by mentioning the adventurous zeal of the British children, indirectly she also refers to the many qualities—physical and mental—that are a part of being adventurous. These qualities would include physical fitness, the ability to work hard and bear pain, adroitness, intelligence, courage, and initiative. The emulation of the spirit of adventure and the inculcation of these qualities of children from the Empire, then, tie into the nationalist discourse of trying to shake off the tag of weakness and effeminacy. If the [male] child is the future of the nation, in that imagined future, he is not emasculated.

Later in the twentieth century, the trope of adventure would resurface in vernacular children's literature, with a male hero and usually peripheral female

characters. This kind of endeavour may be read within the project of trying to reclaim the masculinity that the Bengali man had lost to the coloniser.<sup>13</sup> In 1937, the novel *Chander Pahar* by Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay narrated the tale of Shankar – a young boy from Bengal who dreams of being an explorer like Nansen and Mungo Park. Shankar is able to travel to Africa when, by a stroke of luck, he lands a job with Uganda Railways. The only female character of some importance in the novel is Shankar’s mother.

In “Kashmir”, Abala Basu’s expression of hope that her travelogue at least inspires future generations to go out into the world to witness the splendour of nature, is not pedagogic or nationalist in tone. Nonetheless, there is a lesson to be learnt in and from each of the travelogues which this section will now discuss.

Abala Basu’s travelogue on Kashmir is replete with images of the natural beauty of the place. Accompanying the words are four images, The first of these is of women travelling on the backs of camels; the second is of the river; the third shows the famous Chinar trees of Kashmir; and the last is a pictorial representation of Shalimar Bagh. Only one of the four images include human figures as their subject.

“Agar firdaus bar roo-e zameen ast,/Hameen ast-o, hameen ast-o, hameen ast” [If there is paradise on earth,/It is this, it is this, it is this] wrote Amir Khusrow, the Sufi poet active in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. And the Mughal emperor Jehangir borrowed his words to describe Kashmir. An echo of these words is found in the travelogue, when the author says that she had heard that Kashmir is like the garden of paradise on earth, but had not believed such words to be true. When she arrives in Kashmir, however, Abala Basu says she realises that she had been wrong to question its beauty. At one point she writes about



নদী কোথাও গভীর গর্জন করিয়া ছুটিতেছে, আবার কোথাও শান্ত ভাবে বহিয়া যাইতেছে।

Figure 3.1

seeing tiny villages from the river which she describes in the following words: “Seeing these villages inhabited by farmers on the banks of the tiny, serene river made me feel as if I have come to a new land, to a new peaceful state” (36). This idea of novelty returns once again, almost as a testament to the diversity of the physical landscape of India.

The translation here uses the first-person pronoun, but readers should note that the original text does not explicitly use the ‘I’. In certain instances, Abala Basu uses the collective pronoun ‘we’. However, it is unclear who her travel companions are and how many of them there are. The lack of the first-person pronoun may have been overlooked had this collective pronoun not made an appearance at regular intervals, alerting us to both a collective and individual experience of travelling. The collective pronoun only appears when describing more mundane details in the act of travelling – spending the night at an inn, deciding to walk instead of taking a boat, and so on. The affective aspect of travelling is an expression of individual sentiments. This affective experience is what elevates travelogues from mere itineraries into a reading experience that is intriguing and pleasurable, and endows the act of travel itself with a purpose more than the mere act of reaching the destination.

Throughout the text, the natural landscape is layered with tales from history. This project of writing history into the travelogue creates a dual temporality within the work where two kinds of journeys exist simultaneously—the physical journey of moving forward, and an internal journey into the past—but a past that is also mediated by class, caste, and religion, which is better exemplified by Abala Basu in her account of her travels to Chittore. This is how she begins it:

There is something particularly upsetting about travelling around this country. In almost every place of importance, one finds that the Muslim rulers have tried to wipe away the feats of Hindu kings [...] one is reminded again and again of how wonderful the present rulers are. They take equal care to preserve the ancient sites of both Hindus and Muslims (53).

Her travelogues on Chittore and Lucknow are heavily laden with historical references which are not mere representation, but also (re)constructions of the Indian past through the lens, in this case, of Hinduism. Abala Basu employs the trope of the Muslim as a violent, foreign invader – intolerant, aggressive, and destroyer of temples, which we also find in her references to Kashi and Ahmedabad. The British, on the other hand, are described by her as benevolent rulers.

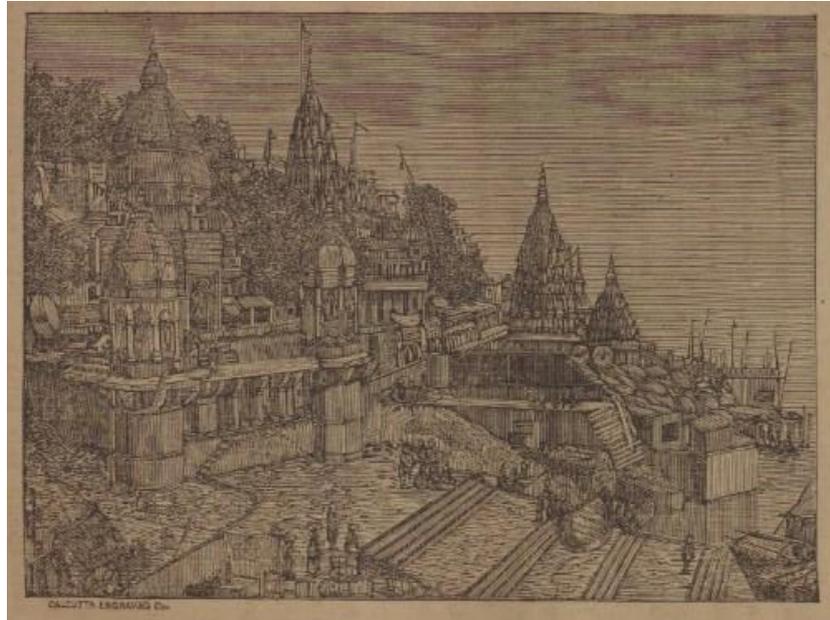


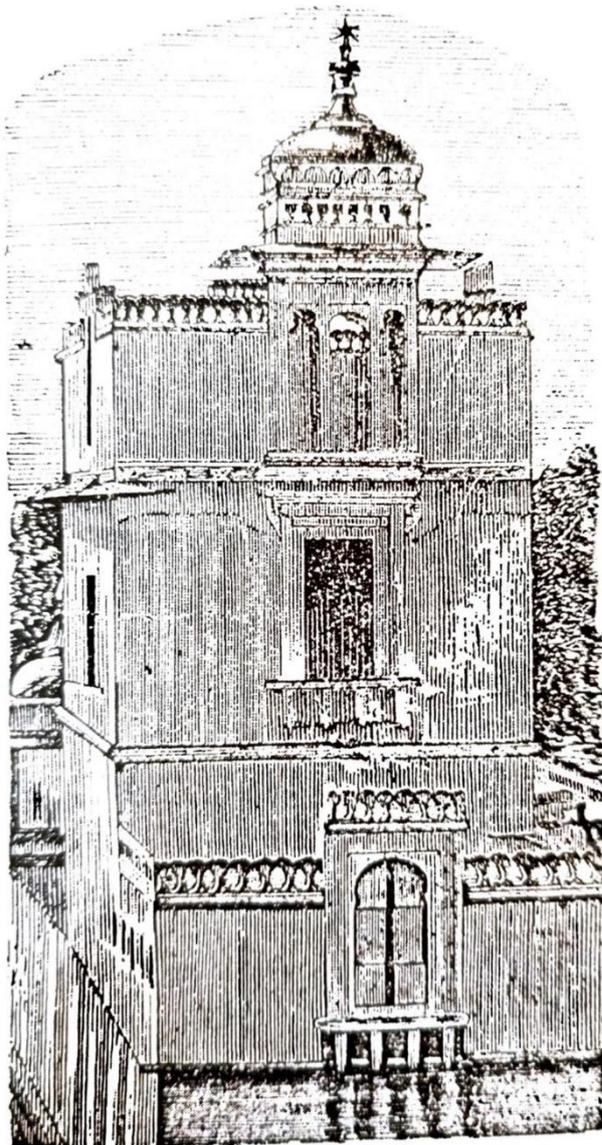
Figure 3.2



Figure 3.3

She writes:

If you visit Kashi, you will see that the old Bishweshwar temple was destroyed by a Muslim King and a mosque was built in its place. Similar things have happened elsewhere where the stones of a Hindu temple have been used to build a mosque on the same spot, or a graveyard has been built over the site of destruction; in some places the stones have been used to build the city gates. Once, in Ahmedabad, the capital city of Gujarat, it was found on a particular street that whichever stone was overturned revealed a god or goddess carved on it. Some Muslim King had constructed the road with the deities facing down (53).



ପଦ୍ମିନୀର ପ୍ରାସାଦ

Figure 3.4

In her travelogue on Chittore, she also glorifies the sacrifice of the Rajput women of Chittore who performed mass self-immolation led by their queen Padmini, rather than surrender themselves to the Muslim king Khilji and his troops (56). She offers no criticism of the practice. “Chittore Darshan” has one image accompanying the text – it is of Padmini’s palace.

The travelogue on Lucknow begins with an allusion to the Indian epic *Ramayana* and the mythological roots of the city. It then moves on to lamenting the passing of such a glorious time in India’s history (42). The allusion to the Indian epic, as this chapter has noted, can be found in history texts from this period where the epics are unquestioningly accepted as records of historical events. Abala Basu, on the

other hand, and surprisingly, seems to be more of a sceptic here. She begins the travelogue with a reference to Ayodhya – the city describes as the birthplace of Rama. She tells her readers that it is a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus, and goes on to say:

In Ayodhya, the *pandas* [guides] show the visitors signs of Rama and Sita. They say, Ramachandra was born over there, or Sita Debi cooked in that room. It is hard to believe such things to be true (42).

Even as she describes Lucknow's past as the city bestowed upon Laxman by his elder brother Rama, she mentions that it is only hearsay. She even admits that the prosperity of Lucknow owes itself to Muslim rulers and says that her desire to visit Lucknow had actually stemmed from seeing the estate of the Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in Calcutta (45). But she does praise the British when she writes about the Residency:

Here Sir Henry Lawrence sought refuge with other British inhabitants of Lucknow from the rebellious soldiers. This Sir Henry Lawrence is famous in this country. He was as much a great warrior as he was a responsible and kind person... (46)

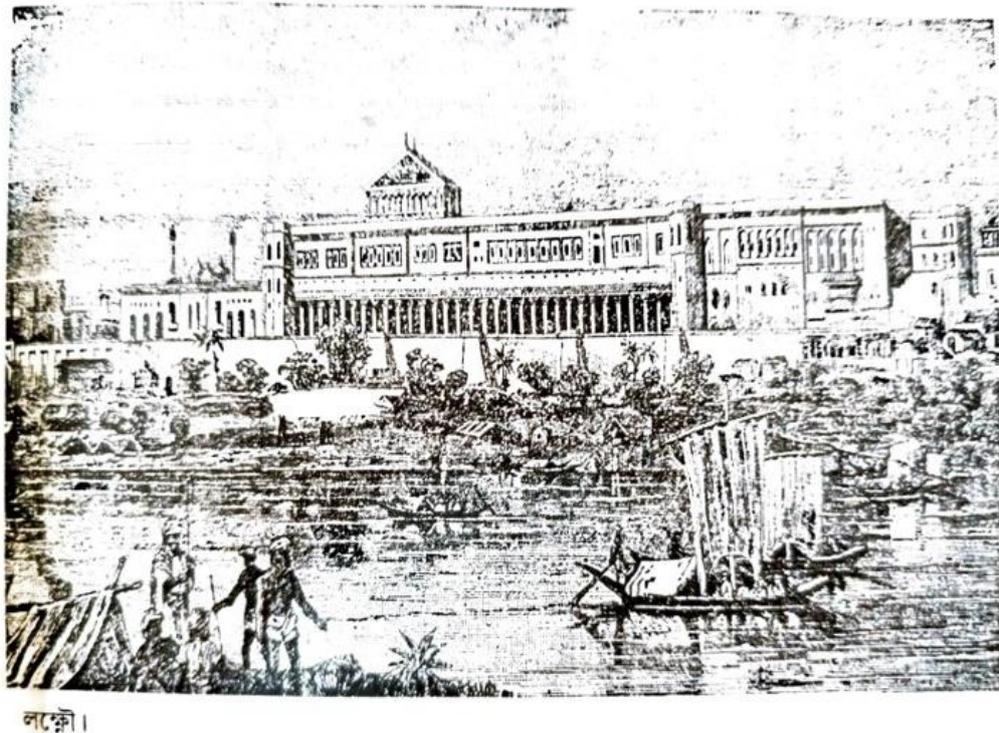


Figure 3.5

The residents of these cities are almost completely absent from the three travelogues mentioned so far. In “Kashmir”, those who do appear in the narrative are marginal to it, both in a literal and pictorial sense, and there are almost no descriptions of interactions with the locals. This kind of invisibilisation, particular also to the landscape form, can also be read within the hegemonic tendencies of the discourse of nationalism developing in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Was the developing culture of modern travel conducive to interactions at local levels? Technological advances in the modes of transport had a profound effect on the idea of time. The railways, the office, and the English education system and also the actual, material introduction of clocks in India meant that a new order of time had entered the pre-existing Hindu idea of cyclical time.

The school, the office, and the railways took away the control of time from the colonised (Sarkar, 2008, 36). Time now belonged to someone else, and it was up to others to follow this schedule, often quite literally. Travelling also became a time-bound activity, best expressed in later stages of the development of tourism in the form of an itinerary. As Sarkar explains, in the initial stages of imperialism, this control of time limited itself to schools, colleges, and offices. Slowly, with the establishment and growth of factories and railways, time began to be industrialised as well. This industrialised time took time away from the worker whose life was now bound by the factory-clock. In case of the railways, it also took time away from the traveller. The slow pace of walking or travelling by boat, common ways of travelling in Bengal, were largely replaced by the time-bound railways. On a train, the traveller could not pause when they desired, nor could the landscape appear as a whole as from a boat. There was always a literal and metaphorical ‘train to catch’.

Bound by this new time, perhaps the tourist/traveller now simply does not have the time to become familiar with the locals. Yet, the image accompanying the text could fill in for what the language cannot. In Abala Basu’s works, human figures remain largely absent, or peripheral to the canvas. In the literal landscapes of “Lucknow” and “Chittore Darshan”, there are no people at all from the present. Instead, figures from history make appearances. This, of course, is in keeping with the fact that the landscape itself is more historical than geographical. But, in case of Kashmir, where the geographical landscape of the present takes precedence, Abala

Basu does not write about the people of Kashmir. In the image and identity of the nation that therefore arises out of her travelogues, the nation seems to be a thing in itself – a thing that occupies a geographical present but temporally dwells in the past. The identity of the nation, then, is constructed in terms of a lack, an absence, as something lost, but in Abala Basu, not yet something that must be rebuilt.

Of the four travelogues discussed in this section, “Madras Bhraman” is unique in more ways than one. When Madras first comes into view from the ship, Abala Basu says that boats surrounded them. The boats, she said, looked different, as did the people (48). There is an image accompanying the text as proof.



Figure 3.6

The second thing she finds different is the language:

When I disembarked, the first thing I heard was the Madrasi [sic] language. Four languages are spoken across the Madras Presidency. Telegu in the North-East, Tamil in the South-East, Keneris [Kannada] in the North-West, and Malayalam in the South-West. These languages are called Dravidian Languages [...] With the

exception of Keneris, the other languages sound harsh to my ears...

(48)

In “Madras Bhraman”, although Abala Basu mentions no interactions with people, she does write about the people of Madras. Her position here is that of an observer who is merely documenting the lifestyle of a people from a distance. This text also sets up binaries, primarily between Madras and Bengal – two presidencies of British India. She mentions that purdah does not exist in Madras (unlike Bengal), and although she has not seen women of aristocratic families going out, she has seen women of middle-class families going out whenever required (51). This is also the only travelogue where she talks about caste:

The behaviour, customs, and habits of the Madrasis are completely different from Bengalis. They still uphold the rigours of the caste system. Other than Brahmin, Khsatriya, and Shudra, there is a fourth caste called Pariyah who are more looked down upon than the cobblers are in Bengal. People of this caste are now converting to Christianity in numbers and improving their condition (51).

Here again she invokes the supposedly positive impact that British rule in India has had on its people. She goes on to mention, towards the end, that because Muslim rule did not have great impact in the Madras Presidency, the glories of the Hindus are preserved here in totality (52).

Other than Abala Basu’s travelogue about Madras, “Mahishurer Patra” by Kumudini Kastagir, published in *Sathi*, is the only other travelogue I have found written by a woman about a city in the southern part of India.<sup>14</sup> It is also worth noting that like Abala Basu, Kumudini Kastagir also uses the plural pronoun when describing her travels without really explaining who her companion[s] are.

The language of the travelogue is formal and verging on purple prose, not quite in tune with the simplicity and attractiveness that *Sathi* outlines in its aims.<sup>15</sup> She writes, for instance, about her journey aboard the ship “Daniya” to Madras, “*Nimne barirashi, upore aseem ananta bistrita akash – prashanta, suneel, asankhya*

*nakhsatra khochito – maharha ratnarajishobhito chandrataper nyay amader mastakopori shobha paitechhe.*” This translates roughly to, “Water below us, and the vast, endless, infinite sky above us – calm, blue, and studded with countless stars – like a canopy of gems and jewels” (108).<sup>16</sup>

Of Mysore, she describes its hills—Nilgiri and Ootacamund—which look like dense clouds from a distance. She describes Mysore as a beautiful city. Her focus in this travelogue, however, is neither on the history nor the geography of Mysore, but, rather, on the traditions and customs of the people. There is a sense of foreignness in the lens she uses to describe the people of Mysore. Kumudini uses the trope of home and foreignness although she is travelling within the country, reminding us of the vastness of the subcontinent and that inexplicable use of the term ‘desh’ in the Bangla vocabulary to mean home. In this travelogue, for instance, Kumudini writes that after saying their farewells they embarked on a journey “to a foreign land [*bidesh*] far away [...] Soon, the homeland [*swadesh*] of my heart disappeared from sight...” (108).

In describing the traditions and customs of Mysore, Kumudini mentions the existence of a rigid caste system. The Brahmins themselves, she writes, are divided into three major categories—Srivaishnav, Madhav, and Smarta—which have further divisions among them. However, she does not describe the repercussions of such rigid structures (109).

In Kumudini’s travelogue, the tone is not overtly pedagogic, certainly not as much as it is in Abala Basu’s, where the reader is also thought of as a learner – an identity cemented by earlier juvenile periodicals such as *Digdarshan* and *Pashvabali*. Although by the last couple of decades of the nineteenth century Bengali juvenile periodicals were aiming for a more informal approach, traces of the past can still be found scattered through these new periodicals. The travelogue is a genre that is able to combine both history and geography. Thus, readers are often encouraged to look at the map of India and locate the place being written about or register the distance between Calcutta and the place concerned. The history they are taught through these travelogues would complement what they learnt at school through their textbooks – setting up the Muslims as outsiders and invaders. This leads us to the second binary against which the Self of both the reader and the author is constructed within these travelogues. If the Hindu Indian can only aspire to be a poor imitation of the British, it

is nonetheless a superior position to that of the Muslim. There is no mention of the Muslim inhabitants of any of the cities Abala Basu visits. The Muslims remain frozen in time and within a single identity – outsiders and invaders in the Hindu landscape of India. In Abala Basu’s landscape of India, the mosques and graveyards built by the Muslim rulers are a violent incursion and not an organic part of the landscape. Thus, it is imperative to turn to the past and invoke a landscape that has been lost to time. This tendency is not restricted to travel writing for a juvenile audience. The only difference is the pedagogic tone. Shibnath Shastri, the editor of the periodical, constructs the juvenile readership implicitly as future citizens. Abala Basu envisages her readers as future travellers, directly encouraging them to venture out into the world.

This section argues that the quest for discovery that Abala Basu seems to think is beyond her readers is also a task that lies beyond her grasp. She is not discovering the nation. She is inventing it. She invents a glorious Hindu past, just as she invents the image of a Muslim defined by violence. Within her travel-writing invention uses tools of memory and reconstruction. The result of these contestations within her travel writing ultimately produces an Image of India as she imagines it – an imagination, which, to borrow Partha Chatterjee’s phrase, is unfortunately colonised (1993, 5). Nonetheless, Abala Basu has to be read as an early attempt by an Indian woman beginning to form an image of the nation, and to be placed within the broader nationalist project of the colonised writing their own history. Even as she subscribes to and employs many of the images she has imbibed from the coloniser, she also seems to be challenging, if not intentionally then simply by writing, the homogeneity of the landscape of India produced by the British – literally and figuratively. In pointing out the difference between the people of Madras and the people of Bengal, in her radically different descriptions of Kashmir and Madras—the constant reference to the novelty of the landscape(s)—she seems to be gesturing towards the diversity of India, but is not yet equipped with the politics and vocabulary to celebrate it or posit it directly as an opposition to the project of homogenisation.

This section will now turn to some of the other travelogues published in *Mukul* and *Sakha*.

Umesh Chandra Nag’s “Elephanta Gahwar” (Elephanta Cave) describes the author’s visit to the Elephanta Cave in Bombay during a puja vacation. He mentions

that it is a place of pilgrimage and that many travellers come to this place to look at the ancient glorious work of the Hindus preserved here. Umesh Chandra, like Abala Basu, also praises the British for their preservation efforts. While the sight of the carvings and engravings delight him, there is also that familiar tone of lamenting lost glory and the current state of Hindus. Umesh Chandra writes:

All the statues have been carved with great skill on the walls of the caves. It is amazing to see how so many such statues – big and small – and the cave was carved out of a mountain. More than a hundred years have passed, and yet, how beautiful it still is! One is still delighted and amazed at gazing upon it. [...] I wandered around, ruminating upon the developed state of the ancient Hindus, our current state, and the might of time (99).

The final travelogue from *Mukul* is Rameshchandra Dutta's "Orissa". He begins by mentioning a stereotype that he will, in his travelogue, somewhat nullify, "Nowadays any mention of Orissa reminds people of the Oriyas to come to Calcutta to work as palanquin bearers. When we were children, even we could not imagine that Orissa was once a land of great civilization. But in ancient times, Orissa really was a civilized place" (365). In his subsequent exposition of the glories of Orissa's past, he mentions the conquests of Bakhtiyar Khilji (addressing his young readers directly) and Kala Pahar and the valiant efforts of the Oriyas against Muslim invaders (365).<sup>17</sup>

At the end of the essay, he refers to Fergusson's opinion regarding the temple at Konarak, providing us with the opportunity to conclude that the works of Fergusson will have been in circulation during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but in Dutta, we do not see any explicit oppositions to his claims (366).

The reference to maps returns in an article by Shibnath Shastri about his travel to the Elephanta caves in Maharashtra published in *Sakha*. He also begins by addressing the readers:

Readers of *Sakha*, you may have heard that around two or three thousand years ago, Buddhism had spread in our country. When you open the map of India, you will find a city named Gorakhpur between Bihar and Ayodhya. Around two and a half thousand

years ago, at little distance away from that place, was a large city called Kapilavastu (75).

The child is encouraged to open a map of present-day India. But on this map of the present, Shibnath Shastri juxtaposes a map of the past—travelling back a few thousand years to the birth place of Gautam Buddha—seamlessly weaving history with geography. He does this again a few sentences later. He writes, “Where you see the city of Patna now was then a part of the kingdom ruled by a king called Ashok” (75).

He continues with a brief historical account of the rise and spread of Buddhism in India and beyond. This account concludes with an interesting paragraph about the evidence of religious conflict in India. This requires some elucidation.

Shibnath Shastri refers to a recent ‘discovery’ that has been made in Ahmedabad (76). The discovery is as follows – when a road was dug up in Ahmedabad, the diggers found bricks with images of Hindu deities facing down. From this evidence, it was concluded that a Muslim ruler must have been behind this heinous act carried out with the purpose of trampling upon the Hindu gods as people walked down the road. This incident was also mentioned by Abala Basu, as we have seen. It is worth remembering that Shastri was also the editor of the periodical in which Abala Basu’s travelogue was published. While both provide an account of this history, there is a tonal difference in the way Abala Basu and Shibnath Shastri’s narration. While a clear binary is set up in the former, with one side painted in a general negative brush stroke, the latter shows an awareness of how rulers of different religions have performed the same acts when their power has been on the ascendency. Shastri’s travelogue becomes important in this context, more so because it is written for children, and also within the larger context of nationalism that was increasingly turning towards the ‘rediscovery’ of a glorious Hindu past.

The two final travelogues this section will discuss are by Jaladhar Sen and Srish Chandra Majumdar.

Jaladhar Sen (1860–1939) was born in Kumarkhali in Nadiya. After qualifying his Entrance examination in 1878, he came to Calcutta to pursue higher studies. Upon completing his education, he worked as a teacher in Goalondo, Dehradun, and

Mahishadal. He was associated in an editorial capacity with periodicals like *Grambarta*, *Saptahik Basumati*, and *Hitabadi*, among others, and was the editor of the periodical *Bharatbarsa* for twenty-six long years.

The literary world of Bengal remembers Jaladhar Sen as a travel-writer whose most well-known travelogue, based on his journey in the Himalayas, remains popular to this day. Within the field of Bengali travel writing, he was one of the first to write about the Himalayas, followed by Ramananda Bharati and others. However, Sen had not embarked upon his journey as a tourist. Having lost his first-born daughter within twelve days of her birth and his wife twelve days after that, ravaged by grief, he left home, seeking an escape from the domestic space. *Himalaya*, serialised in the periodical *Bharati* from 1893 and published as a book in 1900, is based upon the author's journey, made strange because of the peculiarities of its purpose and circumstance.

While *Himalaya* remains his most enduring work, Sen also wrote several other travelogues, and we focus here on one such, not about the Himalayas, but about Delhi, and written, of course, for a juvenile audience.

This chapter will now look at his travelogue about Delhi, published in *Sakha o Sathi* in two parts – the first part appears in the first volume (1301 BS) and the second appears in the Falgun and Chaitra combined issue of the third volume (1303 BS). What strikes the reader immediately about the tone of “Delhi” is its anecdotal humour. The impassive, formal tone of the teacher is here replaced with the friendly tone of an adult narrating a story to a young audience. The adult storyteller is aware of the importance of pedagogy, perhaps because Jaladhar Sen himself was a teacher, but he never appears to be didactic. In the first instalment of the travelogue, he says that their knowledge of Delhi was limited—stemming from what they had read in geography books—and that they knew its location on a map (207). Here, instead of asking his young readers to open an atlas, Sen is drawing attention to the inadequacy of the map in terms of knowing the place—the best way to do it, although Sen does not spell it out—is to travel. The travel-text, then, becomes a supplement and a source.

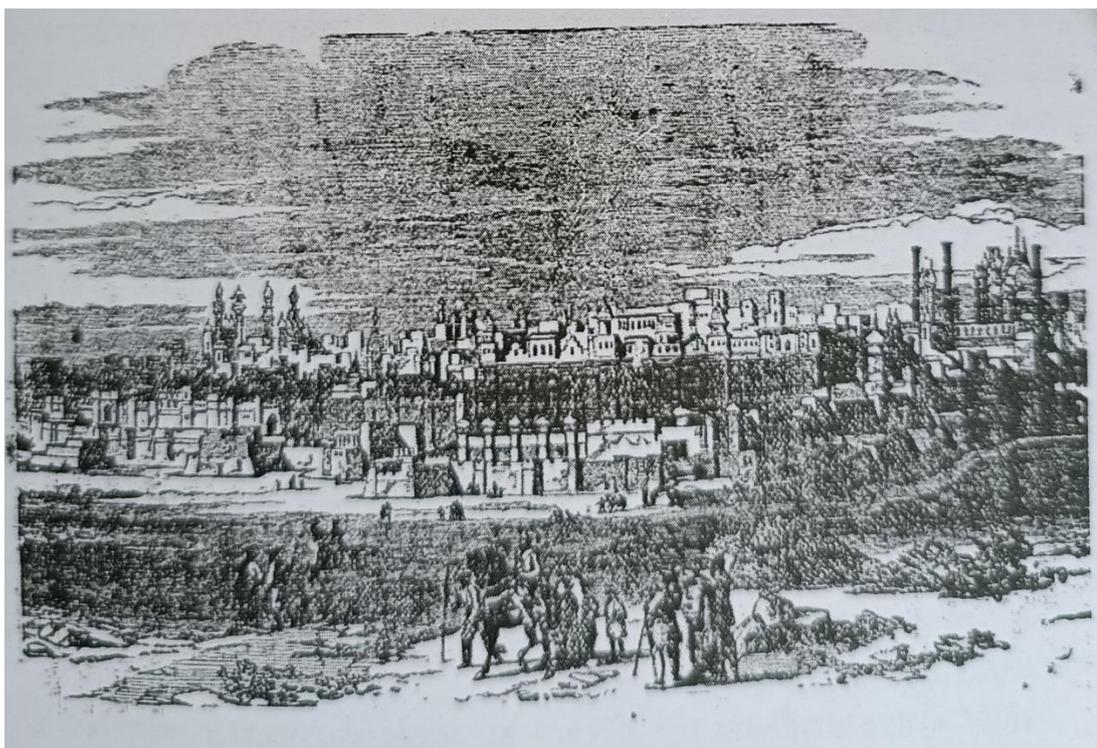


Figure 3.7

In the second instalment, Sen says, however, that he shall refrain from narrating the history of Delhi in these pages, a history that is also the history of India. To know this history, Sen says, the readers may consult their history books. He will consider his travelogue a success, he says, if it can ignite a sense of curiosity in the readers regarding this history (210). Earlier in this chapter, we have discussed, in brief, the history textbooks that were being written in the late nineteenth century. The larger question the discussion seeks to address, of course, is the politics of that history-writing and whose history it seeks to document and how. If the history of Delhi is, indeed, the history of India, one must keep in mind that in most cases this is the history of a Hindu India, even when referred to by the Brahmo authors, and it was a narrative produced through a heady mix of Hindu glory and mythology, especially the *Mahabharata*.

Although the *Mahabharata* is absent from Sen's travelogue, what constitutes history is a question it seeks to address, especially in the narration of the tale of a guide regarding an iron pillar in the Qutub Minar complex. According to the guide, who is a boy of thirteen or fourteen, the pillar was erected by a king to ensure that his line continues to sit on the throne in the years to come. The pillar was commissioned

by him to smash Basuki's [the Serpent God] head. After the construction of the pillar, in order to ensure that this task had been accomplished, the King ordered his men to begin digging the ground. Soon, they found blood. The men who were digging immediately fell to their deaths and the king's bloodline, cursed by the Snake God, also failed to survive (213).

After retelling this story in his travelogue, Sen asks his readers, "Are you reluctant to accept the truth of this tale?" (213) This question, then, becomes the basis on which the young readers themselves can become historians. Jaladhar Sen encourages them to find out about this story from those who know much about it and send it to the periodical. Then, he says, "[...] we shall thank you, and say that finally so-and-so reader of *Sakha o Sathi* has unearthed the history of this relatively unknown iron pillar" (213).

Truth and history share a tenuous relationship and not only in the context of colonialism. The question of power is intrinsically related to who has access to the pen that will write history as well as whose history will be written. In discussing the travelogue, we will see how songs of women and tales told by the elders of the village become a source of history for the author of "Nadiya Bhraman".<sup>18</sup>

Published over two issues in 1885, Srishchandra Majumdar's "Nadiya Bhraman" is a result of the author's travels across the district. In this travelogue, he chooses to focus on three places which hold, according to him, a place of eminence in the history of Bengal – Plassey, Shibnibas, and Ballal Dighi. A fourth section is dedicated not to a place, but a person – Bishwanath the Bandit.

In the historical landscape of Bengal, being associated with Chaitanya, Nadiya already occupied an important place. By the time Majumdar is writing his travelogue, it would have been a well-established pilgrimage destination for the devotees of Chaitanya, but Majumdar brings to the readers' attention the diversity of religion and their co-existence within this district. On the one hand, the villages surrounding the battleground of Plassey could well be a pilgrimage for the Muslims, he argues. The second location, Shibnibash, describes Hindu temples built by Krishna Chandra, and in the second part of the essay, Majumdar also writes about the significance of Chaitanya in Bengal's history.

One of the first things that strikes us about Majumdar's travelogue is his effort, not to merely narrate history, but to document it. Much of this history is anecdotal, collected from the elders of a village or folksongs, for instance. The first section, which describes the site of the battle of Plassey, includes anecdotal evidence from a village headman and a fakir. It also introduces another interesting aspect of documenting history – the literal collection of relics of the past.

The headman of this village that one of his relatives had lived for more than a hundred years. Before her death, the old woman would count that she was around nine or ten years old at the time of the war. They would go to Laxmibag to collect mangoes. Many trees were cut down during the war. One tree had remained, but it died five or six years ago. It was the last relic of the British-Muslim war, it bore signs of confrontations on its body, many had seen that. I heard that a *sahib* from Mahesh Nagar had had a chest built from its wood and sent it to the Empress of India. I too have carried back a piece of its wood with great care (433).

And in the next paragraph:

A *fakir* lives in a hut under a peepul tree...The *fakir* says that under that peepul tree is the grave of the Nawab's brave havildars. Many said that a bit of digging often throws up bones of 'young men'. Sometimes canon-balls are also found. When the sahibs come here, they collect these things with great care. I am not a sahib, nonetheless, I have also collected some things (433).

In the first section, Majumdar also quotes a song sung by the women of the village after the war while sitting at the spinning wheel. The tradition, he says, no longer exists. Thus, the songs too are, in most cases, incomplete. The song, which describes the war as well as the state of things once the war is over, begins, "Oh dear, what a tragedy! The Nawab lost his life in Plassey" (434).<sup>19</sup>

He mentions also a thumri from Lucknow, supposedly the final words of Siraj-ud-Daulah. Majumdar, however, expresses his suspicions, saying that the thumri is a more recent form, created by the last Nawab of Lucknow (434).

The last part of the first section mentions the village of Mangan, eight miles to the north of Plassey, where Mir Madan, the local hero, is buried. It is, he says, “a pilgrimage for the Muslims” (434). His guide, a man named Nakori Mandal from the village of Plassey, is somewhat of an expert on the battle, writes Majumdar, and narrates to the author a eulogy of Mir Madan (434–35). Nakori is also a historian in Majumdar’s text.

Majumdar’s next stop is Shibnibas – “four miles south-west from the Krishnagunj station of the Eastern Bengal railways” (435). The town was established by Maharaja Krishnachandra. In this section, Majumdar focuses mainly on the temples in the area. There are three, he says, and goes on to describe in detail the largest one – Rajrajeshwar. He notes that the outside of all three temples is in ruins and in dire need of restoration (435).

The third section, Ballal Dighi, also relies on anecdotal evidence in its recording of history. In the middle of the lake is a mound – known as the ‘Ballal Mound’. It is said, notes Majumdar, that this is the foundation of Ballal Sen’s castle. There are strange stories about Ballal Sen, he says, but they have no worth in the eyes of history and Majumdar does not mention the stories (436).

He begins the second instalment of the travelogue by clarifying his intentions. Addressing the reader, he says, it is neither the love for universality nor sovereignty that has led him on an archaeological trail. His wanderings around Nadiya are to quench his own thirst; that it should quench the thirst of *Balak* is incidental (467).

Before he moves on to a description of rural life in Bengal, Majumdar includes one section on Bishwanath Dakait, a sort of Robin Hood figure – Hobsbawm’s “social bandit”.<sup>20</sup> “The *bhadralok*,” he says, “has no time for such information, nor the intent to preserve it. I’ve had to collect information with great care from illiterate ‘*chhoto loks*’” (468). This is a rare moment in writing and recording history, especially for children. Majumdar has managed to gather the following information:

Lived in Garhra, Thana Bhatchhala, four krosch to the east of Chapra. Dule Bagdi by caste. Fifty-five years ago, the British government hanged him. [...] Bishwanath would ride a palanquin when he went out to loot. People would refer to him as Bishwanath

baboo. First, Bishwanath would politely send a letter to the rich, asking for money or resources for his group. If they did not comply, Bishwanath would loot them. With that money, he would help the poor and the needy, he would arrange for the thread ceremony of Brahmins, and help out a Brahmin father struggling with the expenses of his daughter's wedding. A lot of people thought he was a holy man, blessed by the Goddess Kali herself. Physically, he did not appear to be very strong. He was small-built. Dark. His main aide and disciple were Megha, who was a Muslim, and Baidyanath, a goala [milk-man] (468).

We have noted already how Majumdar's project includes not just the retelling of history, but recording and writing history. As we progress through the travelogue, the underlying philosophy of Majumdar's project also reveals itself to us, culminating, perhaps, in that sentence about his sources for Bishe Dakat's story. This is not the history of the bhadralok, nor the history-writing of the British who note down even the killing of a bird. History here is alive, in songs sung by village women and stories narrated by the likes of Nakari Mondal. Majumdar creates the larger canvas, but it is their stories that fill in the details.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> The translation is from Jayati Gupta, *Travel Culture, Travel Writing and Bengali Women, 1870–1940*, 2021, p. 123. I have seen the Bangla reprint in Abhijit Sen and Ujjal Ray eds., *Pather Katha: Shatabdir Shandhikshane Bangamahilar Bhraman*, 1999, pp. 52–111. The original text was published in 1295 BS from Calcutta. Prasannamoyee was already a published poet by this time. The Preface to *Aryavarta* is addressed to her daughter Priyamvada Debi.

<sup>2</sup> See, <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/17/re-enacting-art-and-travel>

<sup>3</sup> This will be elaborated upon in the chapter on Natural Landscapes.

<sup>4</sup> Tapati Guha Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India*, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> For more on the history of colonial Indian archaeology in general and Cunningham in particular, see Upinder Singh, *The Idea of Ancient India: Essays on Religion, Politics, and Archaeology*, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Dilip. K. Chakrabarti, *India: An Archaeological History, Paleolithic Beginnings to Early Historical Foundations*, 2010.

<sup>7</sup> From the entry in Kunal Chakrabarti and Shubhra Chakrabarti eds., *Historical Dictionary of the Bengalis*, 2013 – “In 1846, he [Rajendralal Mitra] joined the Asiatic Society of Bengal as its assistant secretary and librarian. Rajendralal was closely associated with many scholarly institutions and journals such as *Tattvabodhini Patrika*, *Hindu Patriot*, and *Saraswat Samaj*. In 1851, he began to edit a monthly illustrated magazine called *Bibidharthasangraha*, which became a platform for the self-expression of some of the finest writers of his time, such as Michael Madhusudan Datta. But Rajendralal was primarily interested in researching India’s past. He published many academic essays in the journals of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Royal Asiatic Society of London, and the Anthropological Society of London. [...] Rajendralal was elected a member of the Royal Asiatic Society of London for his versatile scholarship” (301).

---

<sup>8</sup> See, Rajendralal Mitra, *The Antiquities of Orissa Vol. I*, 1875; and James Fergusson, *Archaeology in India with Especial Reference to the Works of Babu Rajendralala Mitra*, 1884.

<sup>9</sup> In at least three of Bankim's essays published in *Banga Darshan*, he identifies the Mughal rule in Bengal and what he identifies as the subsequent drain of wealth to be the beginning of the downfall of Bengal. He also asserts that the existing written history of Bengal more often than not fails to document the "real" history of the Muslim invasion, relying instead of fabrications propagated by previous Muslim authors. In this context, he shares a moral tale he read as a child – a man once painted a picture of a human being hitting a lion with a shoe. The human painter called a lion and showed it the picture. The lion said, had lions known how to paint, the picture would have been very different (*Bangalar Itihas Sombondhe Koyekti Katha*, 337). This bears a striking resemblance to an Igbo proverb mentioned by Chinua Achebe in one of his interviews – Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter. See, <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1720/the-art-of-fiction-no-139-chinua-achebe>.

<sup>10</sup> See also, Romila Thapar, *Time as a Metaphor of History: Early India*, 1996.

<sup>11</sup> See, *Historical Dictionary of the Bengalis*, 76–77; Jayati Gupta, *Travel Culture, Travel Writing and Bengali Women 1870–1940*, 84; See also, the Preface and biographical sketch by Damayanti Dasgupta in her edited compilation of Abala Basu's travelogues – *Abala Basur Bhramankatha*, 2015 [page numbers not available].

<sup>12</sup> The page numbers of this and other travelogues by Abala Basu are from the compiled edition edited by Damayanti Dasgupta. I have also consulted *Sab Sera Mukul* edited by Asitabha Das and published from the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj (2018).

<sup>13</sup> For further discussions on this construction, see Mrinalini Sinha's *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*, 1995. Also see the discussion elsewhere in this thesis.

<sup>14</sup> Next to Kumudini's name appears the degree she has earned – B. A. She is presumably the same Kumudini Khastagir mentioned by Sarala Debi in *Jibaner Jharapata*. See, the biographical note in Bharati Ray, *Early Feminists of Colonial India: Sarala Devi Chaudhurani and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*, 2012, p. 147; Maroona Murmu, *Words of Her Own: Women Authors in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, 2020; Sukhendu Ray and Malavika Karlekar, *The Many Worlds of Sarala Devi: A Diary & The Tagores and Sartorial Styles: A Photo Essay*, 2010.

---

<sup>15</sup> In the first issue (Baishakh, 1300 BS/1893), the Editorial states that the authors will pay special attention that the essays are easy and attractive (20). Kumudini Khastagir's essay was published in the sixth issue (Ashwin, 1300 BS).

<sup>16</sup> I have quoted the Bangla extract here to give a sense of the language which my translation may not have done justice to.

<sup>17</sup> For more on Kala Pahar [Black Mountain], see Ishita Banerjee-Dube, "Myths, metaphors, meanings: Kalapahar in Bengal and Orissa", 2018.

<sup>18</sup> Srish Chandra Majumdar, "Nadiya Bhraman", Magh 1292 BS/1885. Page numbers from the edition published by Dey's in 1417 BS (2010), pp. 432–36, and Part I, Issue 11 (Falgun 1292 BS/1886), pp. 467–71.

<sup>19</sup> The Bangla extract of the song:

*Kii holo re jaan  
Palashir maidane nabab haralo paran.  
Chhoto chhoto telengaguli lal kurti gaye  
Hnatu gere marte tir Mir Madan er gaye.  
Kii holo re jaan  
Palashir maidane nabab haralo paran.*

*Tir pore jhnake jhnake, guli pore roy  
Ekla Mir Madan saheb koto nebe soye  
Kii holo re jaan  
Palashir maidane nabab haralo paran.  
Hastishale hasti knade ghora khay na pani  
Kii holo re jaan  
Palashir maidane nabab haralo paran.*

*Khas bag e molo nabab, phul bage mati  
Kolkatay boshe knade Mohanlaler beti.  
Kii holo re jaan  
Palashir maidane nabab haralo paran (434).*

And the translation:

Oh dear, what a tragedy

---

The nawab lost his life in Plassey  
The small telengas wearing their red coat  
Bent their knees and at Mir Madan they shot  
Oh dear, what a tragedy  
The nawab lost his life in Plassey

The arrows fly thick and fast, bullets lie around  
How much can Mir Madan alone endure  
Oh dear, what a tragedy  
The nawab lost his life in Plassey  
The elephants cry in the stable, the horses don't have water  
Oh dear, what a tragedy  
The nawab lost his life in Plassey

The nawab fell in Khas Bagh, the garden's turned to waste  
Sitting in Kolkata weeps Mohanlal's lass  
Oh dear, what a tragedy  
The nawab lost his life in Plassey

<sup>20</sup> See, Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*, 1971 and *Bandits*, revised edition, 1981.

## Chapter 4

### Natural Landscape

*The more I see, the more I long to see! The Almighty has given me only two eyes – how much can I see with them? Why didn't the Lord give us more eyes? The more I see and the more I think, I realise I don't have the words to express them.*

*It seems as though every high peak, every waterfall says, at first, 'Look at me! Look at me!' And when I do look at them with wonder-struck eyes, they seem to smile and knit their brows and say, 'Why are you looking at me? Think about my Creator!' It is true. The skill of the painter reveals itself through the painting. What recognition comes from just the name? To us, these lands at the feet of the Himalayas are so huge, so vast – so great! And in the world created by the Great Artist, the Himalayas must be so miniscule!*

– Begum Rokeya, “Kupamanduker  
Himalay Darshan”, 21

This chapter will focus on natural landscapes produced in travel writing for children in Bangla juvenile periodicals. In doing so, it will focus on the picturesque tradition, providing a brief overview of its emergence and development in England and how it made its way into colonial art practices. This chapter will also briefly discuss the emergence of landscape painting in India. The literal landscapes (re)produced in travel texts will then be read within the context of these artistic traditions.

In the introduction to the idea of the landscape in the previous chapter, the importance of the term ‘land’ in landscape within the colonial context has been mentioned. In discussing select travelogues from *Balak*, this chapter will elucidate upon this matter. The discussion on the culture of travel in Chapter Two has shown

that hill stations—Darjeeling and its surroundings as well as those in the northern part of the country – had emerged as popular tourist destinations during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The mountain-scape and the rural landscape will be the primary focus of this chapter. The periodicals discussed in this chapter are *Balak*, *Mukul*, *Sakha*, *Sathi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, and *Sandesh*.

### **The Picturesque Landscape**

Between 1809 and 1811, a series of poems appeared in Rudolph Ackermann's *Poetical Magazine* about a man named Dr. Syntax and his travels. The poems were later collected and brought out in a single volume by Ackermann under the title *The Tour of Dr. Syntax: In Search of the Picturesque*. The poems were composed by the English poet William Combe and the accompanying aquatints had been made by Thomas Rowlandson. Here is Dr. Syntax explaining his plan to his wife:

I'll make a tour – and then I'll write it  
You well know what my pen can do,  
And I'll employ my pencil too:–  
I'll ride and *write*, and *sketch*, and *print*,  
And thus create a real mint;  
I'll *prose* it here, I'll *verse* it there  
And *picturesque* it ev'rywhere... (4–5)<sup>1</sup>

Combe's poems and Rowlandson's aquatints were a satirical response to a mode of travelling that had existed in England for a few decades prior but was gaining more and more currency in the early years of the nineteenth century. This mode, known as 'picturesque tourism', was a departure and often, replacement for the Grand Tour of Europe. While the latter was limited to only the privileged sections of society who could afford it, the 'picturesque tours', which often consisted of touring sights and sites within the United Kingdom, was less expensive, and with the development of modes of transport, more accessible than before.

The term 'picturesque' which lends itself to art, architecture, and landscape gardening was used most significantly by William Gilpin who applied it to the

domain of art, expanding on Edmund Burke's pre-existing schema of the 'sublime' and the 'beautiful'.<sup>2</sup> The 'sublime,' Burke had explained, was something that elicited more than momentary pleasure at viewing. In fact, vast in size, wild, and often violent, the sublime was associated with emotions such as awe and fear. The beautiful, on the other hand, was associated with characteristics such as order, regularity, patterns, and smallness, and was meant to elicit pleasure. One other essential quality of beauty was smoothness.<sup>3</sup> However, Burke did not posit 'roughness' as an essential quality of the sublime, and it is into this gap that Gilpin introduced his third category of the picturesque of which roughness was an essential component.

He writes (1792), "Roughness forms the most essential point of difference between the beautiful and the picturesque [...] it is that particular quality which makes objects chiefly pleasing in painting" (6). Gilpin goes on to say, "[...] instead of making the whole *smooth*, make it *rough*; and you make it also picturesque [...] You fit it for your picture." However, there are some smooth surfaces for which Gilpin makes allowances. The smooth surface of a lake, for instance, could be included in landscape paintings in which, Gilpin broadly argues that "smooth objects would produce no composition at all" (19). However, the smooth surface of the lake could be used to show reflections of roughness, or, in other instances, a smooth surface could be used as a contrast to rough objects around it.

Gilpin defines picturesque objects as those "capable of being illustrated in painting" (3). He is therefore making a distinction between "what pleases in art and what pleases in nature," concluding that "beauty has no place in art" (Tillotson, 2000, 15).

Gilpin seems to be describing natural landscapes as artifacts. Tillotson writes that Gilpin's description of natural landscapes suggests that "they have been designed, and as though a bit of judicious criticism could induce Nature – the designer – to improve her technique" (17).

The idea of altering the elements in the natural scene, rearranging them, editing them, adding to or subtracting from them—an idea advocated by Gilpin who believed that "Nature is most defective at compositions and must be a little

assisted”—is the idea satirised by Combe and Rowlandson and also leads us to the paradox at the heart of the picturesque aesthetic (18).

Carl Thompson writes that on the one hand, “devotees” of the picturesque sought out scenes which were wild or as Gilpin would call them, “rough”. At the same time, following Gilpin, we see that this wildness, while it was not to be tamed, could still be altered to produce the best result in landscape painting. So, Thompson argues, while the followers of this mode were:

[...] enamoured of nature, and in comparison with earlier eras, the views and scenes they admired were far more natural in appearance  
[...] Yet the landscapes most celebrated were nevertheless those which conformed to the rules of composition, totality, and balance.<sup>4</sup>

The inspiration for the picturesque came from painters such as Nicholas Poussin, Claude Lorrain, and Salvator Rosa who were working in Italy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Thompson). The English encountered their art while travelling and brought back home their prints. Their style was then applied to paint landscapes closer home. For this, the ‘picturesque hunters’, travelled to the northern parts of the country. This, in turn, argues Carl Thompson, aided the process of “unification and modernisation of the different regions and nations of the newly-formed ‘Great Britain’ [and] the extensive circulation of both tourists and prints helped generate a new national consciousness, heightening the perception of the British Isles as an interlinked whole.”<sup>5</sup>

The picturesque landscapes of Great Britain sought to present a stable and unified nation-state, masking the social realities of the day and age. In their representation of the rural idyll, for instance, British picturesque landscapes invisibilised the labour that produced these ‘views’. The location of the artist was always at a distance – literal and metaphorical. In eighteenth-century Britain, the ownership of land determined the right to vote and by extension, access to exercising political power. Carl Thompson notes that landscape gardens could only be afforded by the affluent and was intended to symbolise “the harmonious political balance and the ruling class’ careful stewardship of the country”.<sup>6</sup> The picturesque drew criticism from Wordsworth and Coleridge, for instance, notes Thompson, “for viewing the

countryside purely through an aesthetic lens, ignoring the poverty and hardship of many who worked the land.”<sup>7</sup>

The inclusion of gardens in the discourse of the picturesque was a contribution of Uvedale Price and Richard Payne Knight. Price and Knight are two significant contributors in the expansion of the idea of the picturesque. They followed much of Gilpin’s theories, but added certain elements of their own, which included the application of the picturesque to landscape gardening. They also introduced a new element in the definition of the picturesque—the element of ‘surprise’—“a view that was unexpected” (Tillotson, 23). Architecture also formed a significant part of their discussion, especially ruins, which did not only mark “the disruption of straight lines “but of the metaphorical line between architecture and landscape” (23).

The production of picturesque landscapes by British artists was not limited to their own country. With the increase in travel, especially to British colonies, many artists, such as William Hodges, for instance, along with travelogues also produced picturesque landscapes of the colonies to which they travelled. In these landscapes too, they sought to produce sameness, rather than difference, in order to represent the homogeneity of the British Empire.

It is a truth (almost) universally acknowledged by art historians that while the landscape formed a part of Indian paintings—especially Pahari, Rajasthani, and Mughal paintings— the “pure” landscape, devoid of religious or courtly elements, only emerged as a result of the colonial encounter in the nineteenth century.

A change, Tillotson notes, occurred in 1803. The erstwhile Mughal cities of Delhi and Agra were then being controlled by the Marathas. But, in 1803, this control was taken over by the British. Tillotson further notes that this gave foreign powers access to the monuments of Delhi and Agra and they wanted pictorial versions. Local artists were hired for this purpose and subsequently led to the emergence of “one of the genres of Company painting” (11).

Prior to that, when the East India Company established itself in Bengal after the battle of Plassey in 1757, it also began to act as patrons of local artists (Mitter, 1994 14). Mitter notes that the “painters from Patna and Murshidabad, who flocked to Calcutta in search of work, turned out watercolours in the English manner” (14). He

further notes that the East India Company also hired artists for the purposes of documentation which was necessary for controlling these newly acquired territories. Mitter writes, “The Company artists did topographical, architectural, archaeological and natural history drawings, but their best-known works are the ethnographic sets of Indian castes and professions prized by the English ‘picturesque-hunters’” (14).

In the Presidency cities of the colony, namely, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, the colonial administration set up academic art training institutions that were meant to produce draughtsmen and technicians. But things did not go as planned, and what were meant to be training institutes transformed into art schools. In the eastern part of the country, an influential figure in what came to be known as the Government Art College was E. B. Havell who introduced new methods into the school, finding an ally in Abanindranath Tagore. They advocated a close study of Mughal paintings and argued for an Indian art drawing on its own past, rejecting Western realism. In terms of content, they wanted to draw on Indian literature and history (Tillotson, 43).

In Bombay, however, Western academic methods were still thriving. The principal of the Art College, W. E. Gladstone Solomon, was of the opinion that Western influence in art was as “natural” and “progressive” as it was in the case of railways and the motor industry. The so-called pure landscapes, incorporating elements of the picturesque, thus first emerged with the Bombay School in the hands of artists such as Pestonji Bomanji and M. V. Dhurandar, followed by L. N. Taskar, M. K. Parandekar, and S. L. Haldankar, among others (44). “Their watercolours in particular,” writes Tillotson, “show an obvious debt to the formulaic principles of the picturesque” (44).

However, their landscape paintings were not always well-received. With the growth of nationalism, it became a matter of pride to reject Western illusionism (44).

In 1907, *The Times of India* published a piece that criticised the works of Dhurandar as well as Pithawalla and Rustom Siodia. They wrote, “Unless these gentlemen’s names were there to testify to their pictures being the work of natives of India, they might have been taken for those of European painters” (quoted in Mitter, 110). The article singled out one painting— “On a Cloudy Night”—which, it said, had

been able to capture “a typical view of nature and the peculiar quality of the Indian intellect” (110). The artist was J. P. Gangooly.

In the following sections, this chapter will examine travel writing from the juvenile periodicals to find that ‘peculiar quality’ – that almost-elusive idea of ‘India’ which is ever expanding and forever escaping definition. The attempt, here, is to see how and if at all, Bengali authors writing for a predominantly young audience were able to produce literary natural landscapes in their travel writing which was able to capture a ‘typical view of nature’ and examine, what, indeed, that ‘typical view’ was.

### **Fragmented Letters and Fragmented Images**

The young man said—

"If I rightly understand the Shasters, one can save one's soul just as well by remaining at home as by visiting places of pilgrimage."

"Then why did you come?" asked the old man.

The young man replied—

"I told you before that I wished very much to see the ocean, and it is simply on that account that I have come." Then, in a lower tone, he muttered, "Ah! What have I seen! I shall never forget it even in subsequent states of existence!"

- Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, *Kapalkundala*  
(trans. Henry Arthur Deuterios Phillips, 1885)

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay’s second Bangla novel, *Kapalkundala*, was published in 1866. In the first chapter, the reader encounters Nabakumar, literally, the ‘new young man’, who is yet to be named as the speaker of the extract quoted above. He is on a boat with other passengers returning from Gangasagar, and when the scene opens, the reader finds him in conversation with an old man. This old man, and the rest of Nabakumar’s co-passengers, are pilgrims. On that boat, the only exception is Nabakumar, who is a tourist – a new category for a character in Bengali literature in

Bankim's time.<sup>8</sup> In contrast to the pilgrims, Nabakumar has come just to see Gangasagar. This sight/site is important to us to enter into our discussion on what this thesis calls the 'literary landscape'.

Bankim's young protagonist alerts us also to two important factors regarding the culture of travel in Bengal. First, that by the time this novel is being written and published, pilgrimage was an established form of travelling, and was very much a part of the Hindu-Bengali cultural imagination. And, second, by the 1860s, a decade since the establishment of the Eastern Indian Railways, the idea of travelling for the sake of travelling, or, a nascent form of tourism (minus a full-fledged industry) had at least emerged (although perhaps not become extremely popular) in colonial Bengal.

In 1885, Rabindranath Tagore wrote a small piece entitled "Swadesh" in *Alochona*. "A friend of mine," he begins, "travelled to beautiful places like Kashmir, Darjeeling etc, and upon his return, proclaimed that nothing he had seen could match up to Bengal" (123). Many would laugh at such a statement, Tagore says, but finds no justification for such laughter. Comparing Bengal to the mother, Tagore eulogises the grains that fill its lap, the beauty that flows from every corner, the tenderness and affection it exudes. "Thus," writes Tagore, "he merely lives in Bengal, but has not really seen it – he has never been to Bengal, but only seen it as a map!" (123)

Within the space of one small paragraph, Rabindranath uses the concept of seeing numerous times. The first seeing is that of his friend who has travelled to various beautiful places. This friend has 'seen' two things—one, the places he has visited—this seeing is literal; and two, the friend has seen that these places pale in comparison to Bengal—this seeing is used as a stand-in for 'reaching a conclusion.' The next reference to seeing occurs in the context of the people who say that there is nothing to 'see' in Bengal because it is a plain land which lacks diversity. Rabindranath twists the sentence around a little bit in his refutation. He says, sounding quite outraged, "Bangladesh dekhite bhalo noy?!" which would literally translate to – "Bangladesh is not good-looking!" (123). He also makes a critical difference between types of seeing when he says that someone may live in Bengal but only see it in the form of a map and never see the true face of Bengal. Several kinds of seeing and several forms of the word appear in almost every sentence of this short paragraph. We must also pause for a while at the mention of maps in this short piece.

Ever since Europeans set sail to ‘discover’ new worlds, travels already framed within an early-imperialist structure of looking at the rest of the world, for that was essentially what it was, ‘the rest of the world’— ‘New’ and ‘Un-Discovered’—The Rest of the World that needed to be discovered, mapped, categorized, documented, ordered, and organized. With an encyclopaedic bent of mind, the Europeans embarked upon this project of knowledge production. In the Preface to the edited volume of Captain James Cook’s (with whom William Hodges had travelled not once, but twice) journals published in 1893 in Britain, the editor, Captain W. J. L. Wharton writes,

Strange it must appear that the account of perhaps the most celebrated and, certainly to the English nation, the most momentous voyage of discovery that has ever taken place--for it practically gave birth to the great Australasian Colonies – has never before been given to the world in the very words of its great leader. It has fallen out in this wise. After the return of the Endeavour it was decided that a full and comprehensive account of the voyage should be compiled. COOK'S JOURNAL dealt with matters from the point of view of the seaman, the explorer, and the head of the expedition, responsible for life, and for its general success (Preface, vii).

This volume of Cook’s journals from his first voyage contained several illustrations, including a modern chart of the South Pacific Ocean tracing the route of Cook’s ship from 1769–70, a chart of the island of Otaheite prepared by James Cook, chart of the Society Isles (1769), and a chart of New Zealand (explored in 1769 and 1770).

Rabindranath’s dismissive approach to knowing a place through maps, then, immediately makes connections to the imperialist project of charting and cartography, and he seems to suggest that one of the ways of getting to ‘see’ the land, both literally and metaphorically, is through travelling, and certainly not through the study of maps.

This chapter will now examine the way in which the ‘literary landscape’ produced by travel writing is able to challenge the ‘imperial eye’ in the construction and representation of the colony, in this case, Bengal, with specific reference to the poet’s letters written to his niece Indira Debi. In these letters, collected in

*Chhinnapatrabali*, the challenge is not explicit, nor proclaimed. It becomes a challenge simply by being there. Its existence itself is an incursion into the discourse of creating the landscape of the colony – a project that cannot simply be seen as an ‘alternative-producing’ endeavour. The broad theoretical structure within which we have placed the British landscape painters can then also be applied to the case of Rabindranath and his contemporaries who are producing what I have called ‘literary landscapes’ through their travel narratives, in order to examine how they are formulating their individual and cultural identities not in a binary opposition to the West, but vis-à-vis the rest of the country and its people. This section seeks to argue that the production of literary landscapes in the letters in *Chhinnapatrabali* must be seen within the larger colonial project of landscape production and be located within the efforts of the colonial subjects to explicitly and implicitly produce and reproduce landscapes of their own through travel narratives, where ‘landscape’ becomes an interesting site of Self and national identity. It is in this sense that the text serves as a suitable context for the study of natural landscapes reproduced in travelogues in juvenile periodicals.

*Chhinnapatrabali* usually does not appear in the standard list of travel narratives by Rabindranath; it is also a collection not put together by Tagore himself, and, in fact, was published almost two decades after his death. As justification, it suffices to simply mention, of course, that the epistle is an accepted form of travel writing, which in any case, is quite fluid in terms of its form. In a letter from Bolpur in October, 1894, Rabindranath writes:

Yesterday I lay on the bed and wrote a short poem and read a travelogue on Tibet. I love reading travelogues in solitude in secluded places such as this. [...] One of the advantages of a travelogue is that it has a sense of pace, but is not restricted by conventions of plot... (249)

Although disparate letters, when bound together in a single volume, they provide a sense of continuity, a sense of moving forward, that, like the well-worn metaphor of the journey, does not end when it reaches its destination. Perhaps the fact that the epistle itself, in its physical form, has to make a journey of its own that it lends itself so beautifully to travel writing, and, in this case, endows

*Chhinnapatrabali* with the quality and form of a travelogue. Even though we do not read the responses to the letters, the mention of Indira Debi's address, the destination of the letter itself, adds to the sense of movement and journey.

Some of these letters appeared in the 1910 work edited by Rabindranath called *Chhinnapatra*. In this work, the first eight letters were written to his friend Shrishchandra Majumder, and the rest to Indira Debi. These letters appeared as a companion-text to *Gitanjali*, which was published in the same year. In 1920, Rabindranath himself translated the letters into a volume called *Glimpses of Bengal*. Doing away completely with the allusion to 'letters' that the Bengali title contained, Rabindranath instead introduces two completely different elements into the English title – seeing and what is being seen. He writes in the Introduction to *Glimpses of Bengal*:

Since these letters synchronise with a considerable part of my published writings, I thought their parallel course would broaden my readers' understanding of my poems as a track is widened by retreading the same ground. Such was my justification for publishing them in a book for my countrymen. Hoping that the descriptions of village scenes in Bengal contained in these letters would also be of interest to English readers, the translation of a selection of that selection has been entrusted to one who, among all those whom I know, was best fitted to carry it out (vi-vii).

As Rosinka Chaudhury (2014) has also pointed out in her Introduction to the translation of *Chhinnapatrabali*, the word 'glimpses' in the title itself is an allusion to the act of seeing (3). The word is used, I would argue, both as a noun and a verb, and in both instances, refers indirectly to a new way of seeing made possible by a faster mode of transport – the railways.

Rabindranath writes in a letter in June, 1889 –

Near Khirki station, I saw our sugarcane fields, rows of trees, the tennis court, and the house covered with glass windows. I felt an ache in my heart. It's so strange! When I lived here, I felt no special affection for the house. It didn't make me sad to leave it and go to

Solapur with all of you. But now, having caught a glimpse of it from the window of a fast-moving train, having seen it standing all alone with its empty fields and empty rooms, my heart raced to it with lightning speed ... The moment I saw the house, something struck my heart – there was a thump from the left to the right – the train sped past – the sugarcane fields disappeared – that was it, all had ended. ... But the engine thinks not of such things. It doggedly follows its iron path, it has no time to think about who is travelling, where to, and how (14).

The language in this section of the letter is fast-paced – short, almost staccato sentences separated by dashes create this sense of pace, this sense of trying to pack in as much as possible within the page, because the page too is bound by margins. In this passage, Rabindranath uses metaphors of pace as well – ‘lightning speed’, the Bengali onomatopoeia ‘hoosh’ signifying the sound of something cutting through the wind very fast.

The first letter of *Chhinnapatrabali*, written from Darjeeling in 1887, describes the journey from Siliguri to Darjeeling where Sarala, his niece, is described as being in a state of constant rapture by the sights she beholds and urges her Robi mama to see as well:

What else could I do but look at everything she wanted to show me – sometimes a tree, sometimes clouds, sometimes a blunt-nosed mountain girl, so many such things which pass by because the carriage moves on, and Sarala rues the fact that Robi mama did not get to see, but Robi mama is not in the least saddened by this (10).

Here, the images that the young Robi Mama is not as interested in as Sarala, are each a single fragment, evanescent in quality – a tree, a cloud, a girl.

In a letter written from Boyalia in November, 1892, Rabindranath imagines that the receiver of the letter is at that moment on a train and he imagines what the scene outside her window could be like if they were travelling on the Jabbalpur line.

When we read this description, we see, again, the short sentences that aide in the creation of singular, fragmented images within a single sentence, which, however, combine to create a whole:

The scene around there must be brightened by the fresh sunlight, through which distant, blue hills are beginning to be faintly visible. Cultivated fields are scarcely to be seen, except where the primitive tribesmen have done a little ploughing with their buffaloes; on each side of the railway cutting there are the heaped-up black rocks—the boulder-marked footprints of dried-up streams—and the fidgety, black wagtails, perched along the telegraph wires. A wild, seamed, and scarred nature lies there in the sun, as though tamed at the touch of some soft, bright, cherubic hand (111).

Many of the letters are written while still on the way to the destination, which also adds in making this work seem more like a travelogue than a simple collection of letters. The author is in a state of motion as he is writing the letter.

In a letter written in 1891 from somewhere near Sajadpur, Rabindranath writes:

Still on the road. I have been floating since dawn till about seven or eight in the evening. Pace has a kind of attraction – the shore on either side is moving past the eye, that is what I’ve been looking at all day, I cannot move my eyes... (34)

Here, it is not the eye that is moving over the landscape, but the landscape that is the agent of action. It is the landscape that moves and is turned into a *moving image*. This movement is sometimes fast-paced, as we have already demonstrated, or it could be slow, depending on the mode of transport being used. Rabindranath himself has used the metaphor of a photograph to explain his descriptions of the places he visits in his letters to his beloved Bob (Rabindranath’s nickname for Indira Debi). In the letter dated 14 February, 1893, he writes:

Some people have minds like a *wet photography plate* [emphasis mine]. The image that it records has to be immediately printed, or

else it is damaged. My mind is like that. Whenever I see a picture, I think, I must write about this in a letter [to Bob]. Then, new layers add themselves to this original print, and without my knowing, that first picture slowly fades away. I have come to Puri from Cuttack and there is so much to describe about this journey... (124)

In other letters, Rabindranath alludes to painting and pictures when he describes the landscape. In a letter from Shilaidaha in August, 1892, he writes:

Sometimes, when we see a picture, we think, “Oh wouldn’t it be great to be able to live there” – this exact wish is fulfilled here. I feel like I am living inside a bright painting, the harshness of the real world cannot penetrate it (110).

In a letter written on his way to Kolkata by boat, he writes while his boat is on the Ichhamoti, “...the fishermen are catching fish, the women are washing clothes, the boys are splashing about in the water, the cows are grazing, herons are sitting in paddy fields submerged in water, and everything looks like a picture” (204).

In a letter from Kolkata, written in April, 1895, he expresses the desire to travel, the desire to heed the call of the road:

I feel like travelling to a foreign land. A *picturesque* [emphasis mine] land – with mountains and streams and moss-covered rocks, with cows grazing in the distant slope of the mountains and the sky a gentle and deep blue, and birds and insects and the water mingling together to create a strange, soft sound that ripples over the mind... (302–03)

Sound (and silence) is one of the prominent features of the landscapes in these letters, making this landscape multi-sensory. The letter from February, 1894, written from Patisar, provides us with a suitable illustration:

The sky is every now and then overcast and again clears up. Sudden little puffs of wind make the boat lazily creak and groan in all its seams. And so, the day wears on.

It is now past one o'clock. Steeped in this countryside noonday, with its different sounds—the quacking of ducks, the swirl of passing boats, bathers splashing the clothes they wash, the distant shouts from drovers taking cattle across the ford... (174)

Contrasting the movement and the rapid succession of images in the landscape evoked by some of the letters, others display a vast, static landscape – seen from the moored houseboat, at different times of the day, incorporating light and darkness within its canvas. We could consider, for instance, this letter from Shilaidaha:

Our house-boat is moored to a sandbank on the farther side of the river. A vast expanse of sand stretches away out of sight on every side, with here and there a streak, as of water, running across, though sometimes what gleams like water is only sand.

[...] Looking towards the East, there is endless blue above, endless white beneath. Sky empty, earth empty too—the emptiness below hard and barren, that overhead arched and ethereal—one could hardly find elsewhere such a picture of stark desolation.

But on turning to the West, there is water, the currentless bend of the river, fringed with its high bank, up to which spread the village groves with cottages peeping through—all like an enchanting dream in the evening light. I say "the evening light," because in the evening we wander out, and so that aspect is impressed on my mind. (*Glimpses of Bengal*)

Rosinka Choudhury writes that in the letters, the “seeing eye” is never far from “the inner eye of reflection and introspection” (28). But alongside this inward journey is also a movement towards the construction of a national identity, where a leap is made from Bengal to India. In a letter from Shahzadpur in 1891, he writes:

I sat wondering: Why is there always this deep shade of melancholy over the fields, arid river banks, the sky and the sunshine of our country? And I came to the conclusion that it is because with us Nature is obviously the more important thing. The sky is free, the

fields limitless; and the sun merges them into one blazing whole  
(48).

On his way to Goalondo, the poet writes, in 1892 –

Pictures in an endless variety, of sand-banks, fields and their crops,  
and villages, glide into view on either hand—of clouds floating in  
the sky, of colours blossoming when day meets night. [...] If I had  
not heard fairy tales and read the Arabian Nights and Robinson  
Crusoe in childhood, I am sure that the views of distant banks, or  
the farthest side of wide fields, would not have stirred me so – the  
whole world, in fact, would have had for me a different appeal.  
What a maze of fancy and fact becomes tangled up within the mind  
of man! The different strands—petty and great—of story and event  
and picture, how they get knotted together! (95–96)

In this letter, Rabindranath refers to the experience of both hearing fairy tales being narrated to him and reading stories on his own. The acts of listening to and reading stories informs his sense of seeing or perception as they have contributed to the development of his imagination. Literature—oral and written—thus influences the creation and development of the landscape of the mind.

Rabindranath uses the term ‘heterogenous’ to signify this mesh, a word that is a direct challenge to the imperialist project of homogenisation. In a letter from Balia, he writes, “India has two aspects—in one she is a householder, in the other a wandering ascetic. The former refuses to budge from the home corner, the latter has no home at all. I find both these within me” (119).

This leap from the particular to the general, from the Self to the Nation, and thereby, the implicit project of producing and reproducing, constructing and reconstructing a heterogenous national identity, a discourse of *difference* as opposed to *sameness* and a celebration of that difference, to recognise that difference in the everyday – in a blade of grass or the warm summer breeze, in the way that light begins to fade at dusk, or how it dances on the water in the blazing afternoon, in fragmented images as well as sweeping panoramas, is echoed in the letter he writes from Shilaidaha dated 10 August, 1894. Rabindranath writes that when he sets foot on

the planks of the boat, he can feel the different motions beneath the wood—shaking, swinging, swelling, and crashing—and he compares these several motions to the pulse of the country. He writes, “It is as if I am feeling the pulse of the entire nation” (215).

Nationalism also explicitly provides the frame for Rabindranath’s elder brother Jyotirindranath Tagore’s travelogue published in *Balak*, also in the form of a letter.<sup>9</sup> The letter was also included in Jyotirindranath’s collection of essays, *Prabandha Manjari*, published in 1312 BS. This collection of essays was not meant particularly for a juvenile audience, but the inclusion of a travelogue published in *Balak* is proof of the idea behind the periodical and Rabindranath’s more general idea regarding literature for children – that children can and should read all manners of texts about various subjects.

The letter begins with a description of the town of Barishal. Jyotirindranath focuses on its riverine geography and cultivation.

“This area is filled with rivers and rivulets. Thus, the place is a bit damp, but very fertile. The best kind of paddy is cultivated here” (159).

The letter makes clear that the author is in Barishal for business and that remains a focal point of the travelogue. Jyotirindranath uses the example of trade to point to the need for Indian enterprises that can counter British enterprises in the same field. He notes, for instance, that the lack of “public spirit” in Indians and the presence of the same in the English is the cause of the latter’s achievements (160).

In describing the cultivation and trade practices in Barishal, Jyotirindranath’s larger project is to focus on nationalism. It is interesting to note that in this letter he describes the nationalist enterprise and enthusiasm of school boys of Barishal who are helping him in his ship business, dissuading passengers from boarding British ships with their logical arguments. He even mentions a speech delivered by a young boy of twelve at the docks addressing the passengers, warning them that the British ship is not well-built and might drown if a heavy breeze were to blow (161).

A sketch accompanying the text depicts a scene at the docks with passengers lining up in front of the jetty with a signboard of ‘Bharat’ while in the background the Floatila jetty looks as though it has no passengers.

## **Land in Landscape**

Land, in a country economically dependent upon agriculture and under imperial, rule is an important, interesting, and multi-layered term. In one sense, land as a physical entity is related to ownership, cultivation, and production. In another, it is the nation itself – an ideal land, ideally with no owners.

An important moment in the history of land and cultivation in Bengal was the Permanent Settlement legislature of 1793 which was to have far-reaching effects not just on the economy of Bengal, but also on its social and political structures.<sup>10</sup> Land was taken away from the cultivators and turned into private property, alienating the producers from the means and processes of production permanently. Alienation from traditional professions also gave rise to a new class of people – those who now turned to urban centres in search of jobs as clerks, teachers, accountants, lawyers, and doctors (Bandyopadhyay, 2013, 57).

This section intends to focus primarily on land in its physical form and the association of production, reproduction, cultivation, power, and ownership that come with it. It seeks to trace the journey land makes to landscape in literature.

Subho Basu (2010) and Sutapa Dutta (2022) have pointed out that Bengali writers developed their understanding of geography primarily through the available Western textbooks. Based on such works, they wrote textbooks in Bengali both “to meet the needs of the newly introduced school curriculum” and to “fulfil their own intellectual curiosity” (Basu, 63).<sup>11</sup> The analytical study of geography text-books has most often focused on the role they played in first, the development of a racial and civilizational discourse, and second, the exploration of self and national identity through map-making and ideas of borders.<sup>12</sup>

It is not possible, within the space of this thesis, to provide a detailed account of the numerous geography books that were written by British and Bengalis alike through the nineteenth century, especially in the second half. The texts, generally, may be divided into certain categories based on their content. There were some that dealt specifically with the geography of Bengal – this included a study of its populace,

plants and animals, modes of communication, and industry, trade, and commerce. Others had a broader view – studying in the same vein the countries of the entire world. Here, Bengal features as an important province of India. The third category, and with which this thesis is not concerned, has nothing to do with the countries of the world, but focuses instead on the planets and the solar system.<sup>13</sup>

Descriptions of Bengal, as and when they do appear in these texts, have certain features in common. Of these, the fertile nature of Bengal's land is one.

A textbook published by the Calcutta School Book Society entitled *Second Geography* (1874) describes Bengal as “the most fertile and populous province of India” (39) and goes on to explain that this fertility “is owing to the deposite [sic] left by the annual inundations” (40).<sup>14</sup>

E. Lethbridge, the Principal of the Krishnanagar College, wrote *An Easy Introduction to the History and Geography of Bengal* (1874) for ‘the junior classes’ which was also translated into Bangla as *Banglar Bhugol o Itihas* (1875).<sup>15</sup> In his Preface to the work, Lethbridge writes, “I have also endeavoured to make the account as pleasing as possible to youthful minds, by omitting all dry and uninteresting details, and by inserting a good many illustrative anecdotes [...]” (vi). This is possibly an instance of the nineteenth century idea of combining education and entertainment, or at least, the idea that education need not necessarily be a dreary pursuit.

Of Bengal's plains he writes, “The greater part of Bengal and Bihar is an uninterrupted flat, subject to inundation, rich in black mould, and highly productive; some portions are more fertile than others, the Dacca Division being so fertile as to be called the granary of Bengal (7).”

W. H. Arden Wood, Principal of La Martiniere College Calcutta, writes in his work *A Short Geography of Bengal* (1895), “More than one-half of Bengal consists of alluvial plain formed of silt which has been brought down by the great rivers. [...] and the surface, wherever it is flooded during the rainy season, constantly receives fresh deposits of mud which render the soil of inexhaustible fertility” (6–7).<sup>16</sup>

In Wood's text we also find mention of the ‘picturesque’ landscape. He uses the term with reference to Bihar after describing, in more general terms, the plains:

The usual aspect of the plains is tame: a monotonous expanse of cultivated land, here and there broken, where the villages are, by plantations of bamboos, date palms, and other trees recommended by their utility. The roads are sometimes bordered by trees, and in parts of Bihar mango groves are common, and give the country a *picturesqueness* [emphasis mine] which it elsewhere lacks (32).

Significantly, he also mentions that “no year passes without at least a threatening of famine in some part of the Province” (37).

Of those who till the land, he writes, “Nearly forty-eight million of the population are engaged in agriculture and kindred pursuits. The great majority of the peasant class cultivate small holdings, in which they have a right of tenancy that can be sold or handed on from father to son” (36).

In elucidating the element of the land in landscape, this chapter will focus on select travelogues from *Balak*.

In its one-year run, *Balak* published ten travelogues – all by men. Four of these were illustrated. Except for one, all the travelogues were about places within India.<sup>17</sup> This section will now turn to three of these travelogues.<sup>18</sup>

The first of these is Rabindranath’s “Dosh Diner Chhuti”.<sup>19</sup> The title of Tagore’s travelogue clearly refers to the tradition of holidaying. In this short piece, he describes the journey to Hazaribagh via Giridi.<sup>20</sup>

A short holiday of a few days provides only a glimpse of nature, writes Rabindranath. He writes about the vastness of nature – its open sky and open fields. It is in standing within this landscape that the city-dwelling traveller feels a sense of being free. The expansive quality of nature is set up in contrast to the claustrophobic nature of the city (2008, 106). This distinction returns in the description of Hazaribagh which, writes Rabindranath, despite being an urban space, barely displays its terrible qualities – narrow, constricted lanes and bylanes, garbage, drains, the jostling and the hustle and bustle, trams and carriages, dirt and grime, flies and mosquitos (109).

In describing the natural landscape, Rabindranath sets up open spaces – views from the train and from the road. The first descriptions are of views of the landscape from the train which is preceded by a brief description of the physical experience of being on a train (106).

The view from the train is a fragmented one – images moving quickly past and seen from a distance. But even before the actual description of the landscape begins, Rabindranath uses a peculiar phrase to describe his reaction upon waking up in the morning and looking out the window. “What is this new land!” he exclaims, “It is as though our plain land has suddenly shattered into pieces. It is uneven, arid, broken, filled with Sal trees” (107). The scenes in this new land are compared to the landscape of Bengal – which is greener, where trees and plants and creepers share space in close proximity to one another which extends to the way people live their lives (107).

Rabindranath uses distance and vastness as tools to produce his landscape. He fills this sparse, arid landscape with details – trees, the blue mountains in the distance (107). In one moment, there is an apparent reversal of the gaze where it is not the traveller who is looking out from the window of the train, but a man with his bullocks in the field, standing still and staring at the train (107). Through this apparent reversal, Rabindranath is, for a moment, able to camouflage the presence of the traveller, whose gaze upon the farmer in the field hides itself, thus ‘apparently’ reversing the gaze of the narrative, even if for a brief, fleeting moment. The details used by Rabindranath, his framing devices, all contribute towards lending his descriptions with a picture-like quality. He writes, “As far as the eyes can see from the dak bungalow, there is no sign of grass. There are some trees in the middle. It is as though there are waves of red earth. A thin pony tied to a tree is looking around and wondering what to eat and having no other work, is rubbing its back against the bark of the tree under which it stands” (107–09).

As they leave Giridi, a landscape similar in scope and scale is presented before the readers, “One can see till a great distance in front and on turning one’s head. Within a dry, empty, vast fields, a long shadow-less path lies like a snake in the sun” (109).

Rabindranath is able to recreate that peculiar quality of the landscape where, despite the many details, the landscape is seemingly empty. Within a frame, the sense of emptiness must also be constructed through the use of details, “Everywhere I look, there are no people, no habitation, no harvest, no cultivated land; everywhere the uneven earth is lying like the silent, grave, hard ocean” (109).

Right after, there is a passing reference to the farmers working in the fields. They are far away, barely visible within the vast landscape (109).

Unlike other travelogues, here the author/traveller does not provide an itinerary or list of things to do at the destination. Instead, after the rigour of the journey, a sense of leisure pervades the text. Using a now well-worn metaphor, Rabindranath writes, “It looks like life here does not proceed by huffing and puffing like the fast engine or squealing in pain like the wheels of a bullock-cart” (110) The author describes his own state as follows, “Sleep is coming to me. But it is not an all-consuming sleep. The beauty and peace of the natural surrounding has embraced me affectionately, I can feel that. Only the consciousness about the details is slipping away” (110).

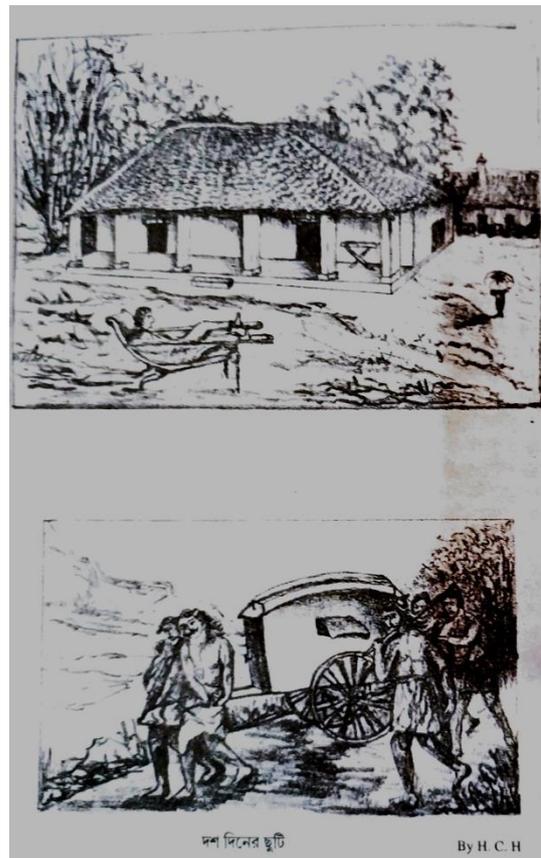


Figure 4.1

The peace is often interrupted by the sound of the bell ringing out from the court which is near the dak bungalow. Within this “silent” and still space is thus created a reflective and contemplative time which is then interrupted by the mechanised, imperial time symbolised by the bell (110).

Another travelogue about a visit to the ‘paschim’ is by Niharika Debi – a young girl who writes about her travels to Palamou in *Mukul*.<sup>21</sup> Of the natural beauty of Palamou, she writes:

There are mountains all around us. [...] There are fields filled with crops. Occasionally, a field of wheat. Sometimes, you can hear the song of the women working in the fields – unclear but sweet. [...] Deep forests of mahua trees line either side of the road. It is possibly from these trees that the place has gotten its name (79).

The landscape of her travelogue is created while the traveller is on the move. It moves from the mountains in the distance to the nearby fields to the mahua trees – shifting between the cultivated and the wild landscape with ease, without stopping to distinguish between the two.

Rural Bengal, at least in the first part of the travelogue “Nadiya Bhraman” by Srish Chandra Majumdar (1885), does not appear to us through familiar, predictable landscapes of fields and trees and song of the birds. When the natural landscape appears, we find a landscape of decay – a river almost dead, a lake almost dry. About Plassey, he writes:

We have read in History that the Ganges flows to the south in Plassey – but now I see she is more inclined to the west. The old river-bed now lies with its skeletons bared – its memories well up only for a few days in the monsoon. [...] It is doubtful if there’s a bigger field in all of Bengal. As far as the eyes can see, there is only emptiness. The soil is very hard, even grass can’t grow properly on it [...] (432–33).

And about Ballal Dighi, he says, “There is a skeleton of a large lake called Ballal Dighi here which is dry all year round except in the monsoon” (435).

The emptiness of the natural landscape—much like the relics and ruins of the past—seems to have acquired a haunted appearance. We find here a historicisation of geographical and ecological changes. It appears as though the history of political loss has manifested itself in a denuded, dry landscape which is parched and unable to sustain life. This, as we shall see, is in stark contrast to the more frequent description of the land of Bengal as green and fertile.

In the second part of Majumdar's travelogue, he turns to the 'natural' landscape of rural Bengal.

The physical and literal turn towards rural Bengal made by Majumdar in this article comes with his pleasure at being able to witness festivities in the Bangla month of Poush. There was a time in his childhood, he recalls, when he could feel completely the beauty of this month. He rues that with the passing of childhood, his measures of happiness also seem to have changed (469). Gargi Gangopadhyay has pointed out (2012) that when Majumdar writes about rural Bengal, he presents a landscape that is "pure" and "pristine" and within which "the author can [and does] regress into his past, into an unalloyed 'innocence' of nature" (201–02).<sup>22</sup>

This is the month, Majumdar writes, when Bengal displays its natural beauty in every aspect. He writes, "The profusion of green everywhere in the fields of the winter harvest, and in the midst of that, the golden hue of paddy. [...] After that, how happy is the sad and destitute farmer of Bengal" (469).

Politicians, he argues, should visit rural Bengal during this month. What does Bengal lack, he asks, describing Bengalis as children of this greenery, who should be singing songs of happiness instead of screaming in agony. There is unending wealth, he says, in the fields. Sugarcane and date trees shower sweetness and the natural beauty of Bengal – its blue sky and green fields, flowering trees and fruits, he says, are always prepared to shower affection. And yet, says Majumdar, we howl in pain (469).

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay would probably have disagreed. In his essay "Bangadesher Krishak," reprinted by him in 1872, he casts a sweeping and critical gaze over the supposed prosperity of Bengal and asks, "Whose prosperity is this?" (288).<sup>23</sup>

His answer, Sumit Sarkar writes (2015), "is a resounding negative, given deliberately from the point of view of Hashim Sheikh and Rama Kaivarta, a Muslim and a subordinate-caste Hindu" (365). Hashim and Rama are both poor peasants. Bankim describes their back-breaking labour in the field under harsh conditions and the scarcity of food that awaits them at home. Neither the (English) educated

*bhadraloks* nor the English lords themselves, alleges Bankim, have done anything for the farmers (288).

Majumdar blames the howling on urbanity. It is the turning away from rural Bengal and the proximity to the city that has caused pain and suffering, he says (470). In rural Bengal lies the true heart and soul of Bengali-ness – in its green, fertile lands and in the structure of the joint family (470).

Majumdar, here, displays familiar anxieties of the middle-class Bengali in the late nineteenth century. The first is the anxiety that came with the splitting of the home. Following Satadru Sen's argument, this thesis has noted in a previous chapter how the child was split, physically and emotionally, between the new home in the city and the ancestral home in the countryside and that the latter came to represent the "real thing", or, in Majumdar's language, the "true heart and soul". It is perhaps also possible to argue that the home in the city was predominantly and for most, a temporary dwelling – the rented house or *bhara bari*, as opposed to the permanence of the *bhite* which would also contribute to this bifurcation of space, within and without.

The turn to the urban centre or the city took place largely due to the [male] adult searching for employment and a better life. It was the latter that did not fit into the schema of tradition. To search for a better life in the city was a turn towards materialism and materialism was not what being Bengali, or indeed, being Indian was about.

This leads us back to one of the central debates regarding nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century between tradition and modernity. The inward turn that nationalism in Bengal takes during this time leads the Bengali back to the home – the *andarmahal* and the home in the countryside.

And thus, Majumdar also must mention the 'angels' of the home—the women and the mothers—here compared to the Goddess Laxmi. In that reference, it is impossible to ignore the underlying echoes of Bengal as the ideal and most glorious Mother.

Prabodh Chandra Ghosh begins his travelogue on Gaya (1885) by establishing the gaze of the traveller. Gaya would have been well-known as both a Hindu and

Buddhist pilgrimage. Ghosh begins, “As far as the eyes can see on the way to Gaya from Bankipur are plain lands” (521). The landscape as well as the gaze of the traveller are introduced in the very first sentence. The location of the traveller is unclear. However, it seems to be static – presenting a panoramic view. At the same time, there seems to be a sense of movement in the language used – a sense of moving from Bankipur to Gaya, of being on the road. This also helps in creating a sense of immediacy, as if we are on the journey at that moment with the author.

The initial introduction to the landscape is of vast, cultivated land. Yet, there is a sense of this landscape being natural, especially in the swift leap it makes from the specific landscape of Gaya to the general landscape of India – “limitless and filled with crops” (521). The harvest is identified as the intrinsic wealth of India that no amount of looting can diminish. In this sense, too, it is presented as an unending natural resource.

Ghosh spends a paragraph describing the land, which is arid, and the peasants who are poor. He writes, “The condition of the farmers here is quite bad. They are very poor. Not only them, everyone here is very poor. [...] The bullocks are skeletal – one can clearly see they do not get enough to eat. [...] This area does not receive a lot of rainfall. The land here is not as naturally fertile as lower Bengal” (521).

Ravaged by famines and epidemics, burdened with an unjust revenue system, and dispossessed of land, the hands that shaped the fields of rural Bengal would perhaps not have found in it the image of a young woman, surrounded by playful and laughing children, “in an arcadia rich with fruits, vines, and flowers” – the lithograph by Harish Chandra Halder that accompanied ‘Bande Mataram’ in the second issue of *Balak* (Gangopadhyay, 2012, 335).

The brief survey of geography text-books, travel narratives, and nursery rhymes shows that inexhaustible fertility and immeasurable wealth in the form of crops are recurrent motifs in these texts. When exceptions occur, it is only to prove the rule.

The nationalist imagination of Mother Bengal (and Mother India), at least in the travelogues under consideration, mostly ignore the plight of the peasants. except Prabodh Chandra Ghosh’s “Gaya” acknowledges the distress. But, in the same

paragraph, also praises the landlords for setting up a beneficial system of irrigation. He does not ask why, in spite of such benevolence, he has to use images of starvation to describe the condition of the farmers who inhabit and till this land.

Emerson, notes W. J. T. Mitchell in “Imperial Landscape”, said that a landscape has no owner – “you cannot freely admire the landscape if labourers are digging in the field”, Emerson says (2002a, 15). The cultivator, already denied access to the means of production and its resultant harvest, is most often denied entry into the literal landscapes produced by travel writing. Mitchell elaborates Emerson, “Landscape must represent itself as the antithesis of land, an ideal estate as opposed to a real estate, as a poetic property rather than a material one” (2002a, 15). Landscape takes away the materiality of the land while retaining its essentially material feature—fertility—by ‘naturalising’ it.

Fertility is burdened already with connotations of gender. In the context of imagining the land as Mother, this connotation is reinforced. In a larger sense, the imagining of rural Bengal as the repository of Bengali selfhood and identity also, more often than not, locates the woman as the central figure, representative of the Home. We see this happening explicitly in Majumdar’s travelogue, for instance. In the nursery rhymes (discussed elsewhere in this thesis) it is the figure of the mother who recurs time and again. Moreover, both the rhyme and the fairy tale, in their origins, are usually traced back to women. As Rabindranath writes in his Introduction to *Thhakurmar Jhuli*, these were tales told by mothers and grandmothers at home while the children sat around the halo of the lantern.

The journey from land to landscape, from “a site to a sight” (2002b, 265) involves a process of construction and (re)production. In both instances, the terms ‘construction’ and ‘production’ carry connotations of labour. In responding to imperialist homogenisation of the landscape, the ‘bespectacled babus’ of Bankim (288), writing about the Mother Land invisibilise and marginalise the labour that brought the land into being. The gaze in these travelogues is an urban outsider who has returned to the countryside – to rest, to explore, or participate in festivities. But, as Bankim asks, “When all the cultivators are angered, who will escape? What will happen?” (289).

## **Holidaying in the Hills**

In May 1888, a short humorous skit was published in *Sakha*. The second scene of this skit is set in Sealdah station and the characters are a boy called Binod, his father Ramhari, and a gentleman called Digambar whose practical sense is the subject of this skit's mockery. Binod is on his way to Darjeeling and his father is worried since this is the first time the boy is travelling alone. Ramhari is then relieved to see Digambar because he thinks he can ask the gentleman to look after his son on the way if they are travelling by the same train. When he reveals his intentions to Digambar, the latter asks, "Why Darjeeling? What work does he have there?" To this, Ramhari replies, "There is no work as such. He's been saying for a long time that he wants to see the mountains and his health has not been well recently, so I am sending him there." Digambar fails to understand what one can want to see in a stack of stones, which is what the mountains are to him. Binod now chimes in.

"I have heard that there is a somberness to the mountains," he says. "I have heard that it looks beautiful when the rays of the sun fall on the snow-capped mountain peaks. When the streams flow down the mountains, and the warm rays of the moon fall on those streams – that too, I have heard, looks beautiful. That is why I am going" (80).

We shall find out, from the travelogues we are about to discuss, if Binod had heard right.

Satyaprasad

Gangopadhyay's travelogue to Darjeeling was published across two issues in the first year of the periodical *Balak* (1885) – Baishakh and Jaishthya. The first was entitled "Darjeeling Jatra." As the title shows, this travelogue describes the author's journey to Darjeeling with a friend. He is going on a holiday. There is no explicit, sombre call here to discover the nation, nor a spiritual quest.

The humorous description of the author's journey is anecdotal rather than didactical. It also offers us a glimpse of a newer form of travel writing – secular, informal, more like a story than a classroom lecture. We have seen this also in the travelogues of Rabindranath and Jaladhar Sen, for instance, and will see it again in the travelogues of Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri.

As previously mentioned, *Balak* was based on the idea that its juvenile readership was not to be treated as naive creatures who know nothing or ought not to know anything about the world around them except for what the textbooks tell them. In this sense, *Balak* actually does think of its readers as young adults rather than the connotations that the term 'children' carries. However, the point worth noting is that the title of the periodical is gender-specific. Hopefully, this did not extend to its readership, intended or otherwise. When Rabindranath writes about his own reading habits as a child in *Jiban Smriti*, he mentions that they would read anything they could get their hands on (perhaps partly due to the reason that juvenile literature in Bengali was yet to come into its own in Tagore's early years).

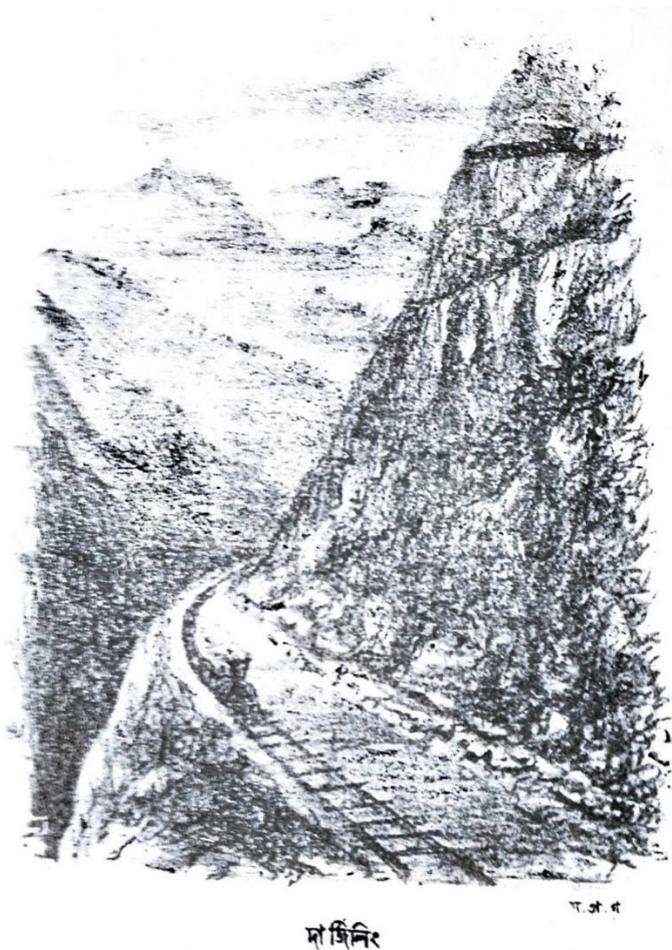


Figure 4.2

Perhaps in keeping with this philosophy, Satyaprasad does not shy away from throwing the Ilbert Bill into the mix as the topic of discussion between them and their fellow British traveller, albeit only in passing (7). The main focus of the travelogue is the natural landscape.

Upon reaching the foothills, the author travels on the toy train from Siliguri to Darjeeling, picking out a glass-covered coach so that he can enjoy the spectacular views that the journey has to offer. The description of the upward climb creates a unique literal landscape for it allows the traveller a peculiar vantage point – to look down into the valley and up to the mountains. The serpentine nature of the mountain roads helps in creating this literary landscape. Accompanying the travelogue is a sketch by the author himself of the train climbing up the mountain. The sketch depicts a side of the mountain in the foreground. The rest of the range recedes further into the background with the shade getting lighter and lighter until the outlines are so blurred that they can barely be distinguished from the sky. In the foreground, we can see the train on the tracks, placing the viewer outside the landscape, thus creating a frame, and judging by the size of the train, also far away from it.

The literal landscape the author (re)produces uses metaphors of painting to describe the natural, physical surrounding. “From afar, the tea gardens look very beautiful, as though someone has tinged the mountains with tiny green dots” (11). And further on, “When the train climbed down one *krosh*, the small houses of Darjeeling looked like a painting on the mountain from a distance” (11).

In both examples, we see the author using a framing device by placing himself, and, by extension, his readers firmly outside the landscape as well as at a distance from it.

In Satyaprasad’s descriptions, too, we notice the tendency to naturalise a cultivated scene. He mentions fields of paddy and tea garden in passing in words that make them appear to be a natural part of the landscape, invisibilising the human labour that brought them into existence.

In the second instalment of the travelogue, the author describes his experience of seeing Kanchenjunga, which, he says, he had read about in his geography textbook as a child (68). Gangopadhyay writes, “When the dawn broke, that is, when the sun

rose, then it was crimson at first. As the sun rose higher, the hue changed to golden and finally shone completely white. It looked so beautiful then that it cannot be described” (69).

Painting returns towards the end of the travelogue. The author, after seeing the famous peak, wishes to paint it, and true to his wish, sets out to the Observatory Hill to carry out this task. The picture accompanies the text of the travelogue.

Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, who wrote multiple travelogues about Darjeeling, was, as this thesis has noted, a painter himself. Of the artist Upendrakishore, Satyajit Ray says that he was a perfect synthesis of eastern and western art. He mainly did oil paintings and illustrations. The oil paintings were predominantly of landscapes of places he had travelled to. These include the Sal forests of Giridih, the Usri river, the hills of Darjeeling, and the sea at Puri. The most noticeable feature of these paintings, Satyajit Ray says, is that “nature’s unique beauty, disposition, or mood seem[s] to have left an indelible impression on him – and that was the quality of profound serenity” (408)<sup>24</sup>. According to Ray, the artist of these landscapes seems to be saying, “Here my role is non-existent; it is nature that is omnipresent. Nature is beautiful, nature is serene; hence my picture is beautiful and serene too” (408).

Leela Majumdar writes (1993) that in case of landscape oil paintings, Upendrakishore had been influenced by artists such as Constable and Turner. Like them, she says, he also painted scenes from real life. Majumdar also mentions his painting of the river Usri, the seascape at Puri, and the snow-clad mountains of Darjeeling as examples of his unique style (36).

Of these many paintings, it is unfortunately and for reasons unknown, only the one of Kanchenjunga that remains (Ghosh, 2017, 29–30). The first print of this painting was published in the journal of the Indian Academy of Fine Arts in 1920 (30). The year of the composition is unknown. Subimal Ray mentions his father busy with a painting during their visit to Darjeeling in 1904 (28). Upendrakishore mentions painting the mountains in his travelogue “Megher Muluk” published in *Sandesh*.<sup>25</sup> In the second instalment of the travelogue, he writes:

Some days, I wake up and find cloud-children asleep on the back of the mountains. Above their heads, one can see the blurry, ash-coloured Himalayan peaks. The sun hasn't risen yet. There is only a little bit of light – like a shy smile – in the eastern sky. Soon, a blush begins to spread across the face of the Himalays. In a hurry, I sit down with my paint and brush, thinking that I shall draw many, many things (107).

But his most vivid description appears in the third and final instalment:

At dawn and at dusk, when the light of the sun changes rapidly, so too does the appearance of the Himalayas. From looking like sugar-candy in one instant, it resembles the colour of fire in the next. And in another instant it changes to gold, then to the silver of the needlework on a piece of white cloth and then to chalk-white – it is like a magician's trick (145).

The title of the travelogue is also worth noting – “Megher Muluk” or “The Land of Clouds”. It immediately evokes an image in the mind of the reader and introduces them to the setting and the physical nature of the place they are going to find out about. Darjeeling is introduced in the opening sentence in relational terms to Calcutta – it is seven and a half thousand feet above the city, Upendrakishore says (70). The relational point being Calcutta also possibly betrays the idea that the editor of *Sandesh* was presumably thinking of an urban readership for his periodical. Indeed, the so-called colloquial language that Upendrakishore uses in *Sandesh*, a language that later critics, as we have seen, have described as ‘accessible’, is the language of urban Bengali children and in most cases, not of their rural counterparts. When Bangla begins to be standardised, the benchmark of this standardisation is the language of the urban middle-class. The politics of the language debate aside, Upendrakishore's use of Bangla is lucid, free-flowing, and laced with a subtle sense of humour. This anecdote about an elephant is one such instance:

The beauty of the forest on the way to Darjeeling is lovely. If one were to go alone through the forest, it would be a life risk, but there's nothing to be afraid of if you're on the train. But once, there

was a huge wild elephant right in front of the train. Perhaps it had thought the train was some new wild animal. So, standing in front of it, it was wondering whether to fight or take flight. Then the driver suddenly blew the whistle of the train and the elephant also squealed “Oh dear” and tucking its tail between its legs, fled the spot as fast as it could! (72)

Even his descriptions of natural beauty, for instance, of the trees that line the mountain path, are unencumbered by superlative excesses:

There are large trees on the side of the road and they also have flowers of various shades. Some are entwined with huge creepers; some are covered in moss that look like long beards. I look down – oh! – how deep the forests are! It has covered the mountains in such a way that the day feels like night (72).

The author’s reaction to the natural landscape that surrounds him is also expressed in direct, honest, and simple terms. For instance, he writes, “If you climb one mile, you can see fields stretching up to ninety miles. Of course, you can’t really understand much from so far, but what can I say – the heart simply fills with joy!” (73)

In this account of his travels, Upendrakishore uses a trope we have previously encountered in “Dosh Diner Chhuti” by Rabindranath. The mountains are described as a “new land”. Upendrakishore writes that as you climb higher and the chill really begins to get to you, you realise that you have “arrived in a new land” which has “a new sort of wind, a new kind of beauty; here, the people are new, and new are the games of the clouds” (73).

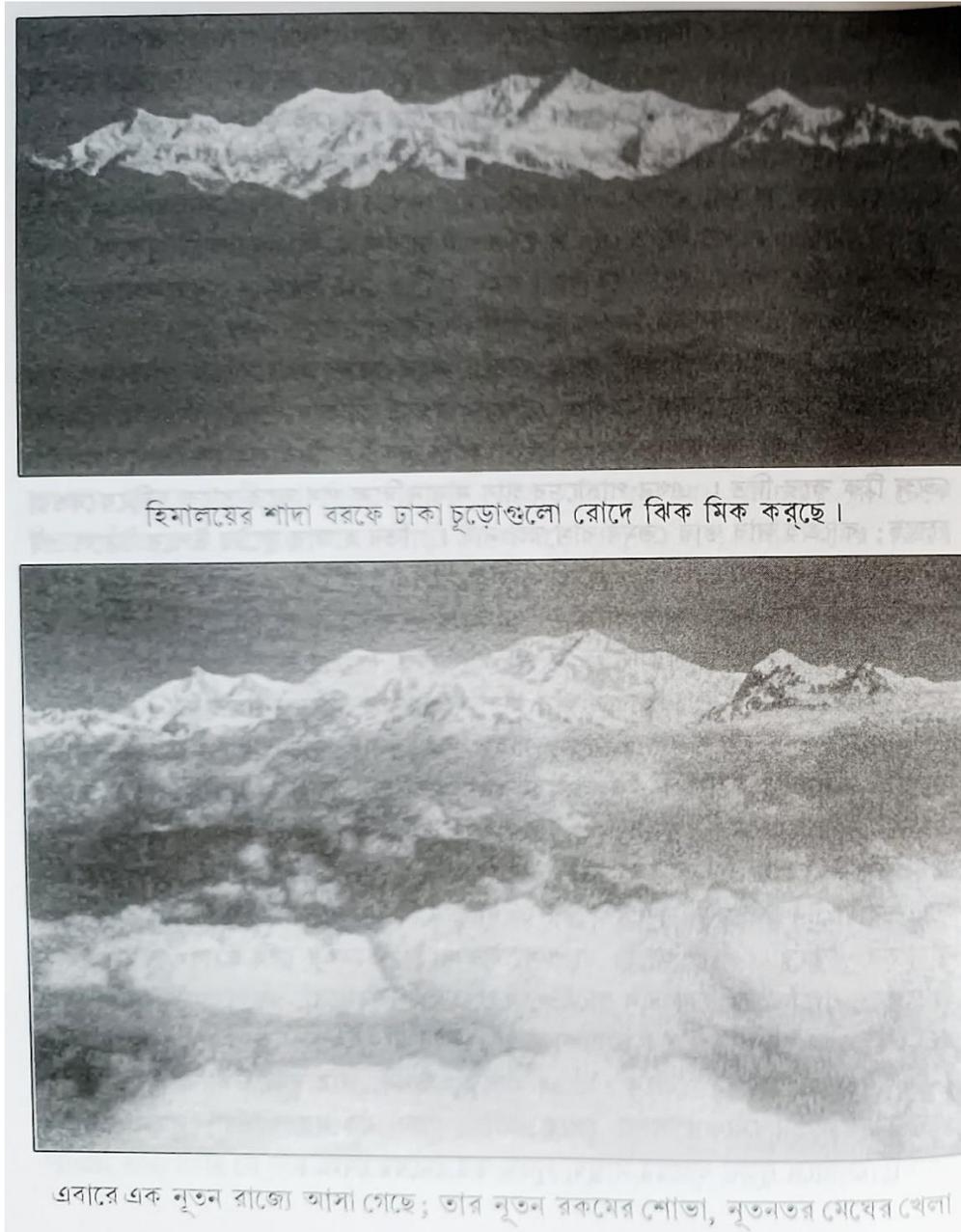


Figure 4.3

In the second instalment, Upendrakishore explains this novelty, especially the newness of the clouds. In this explanation, too, there is the idea of home and foreignness. He writes:

When we are at home, we only gape at the clouds high above us.  
 But now, I have come to the home of the clouds and entered their  
 lair – so I can gauge every little thing about them. Before, I was a  
*bideshi* [foreigner], now I have become a man of their country (106–  
 07).

*Sandesh* may not have published more than one travelogue in its first couple of years, but this single piece by Upendrakishore is enough to alert us to the tonal shift that is taking place, literally and metaphorically, in travel writing for children in particular, but in a larger sense, perhaps in the world of Bangla children's literature in general. If there is information to be imparted, and there is, Upendrakishore weaves it seamlessly into his storytelling – which is the tone of his travelogue. One can see this gradual development from the travelogues of Abala Basu published in *Mukul*, for instance, which sounded more like lessons in a classroom, to Upendrakishore's travelogue, which reads more like a story. Possibly, this also had to do with Upendrakishore dedicating himself to the cause of children's literature – both at a personal and more significantly, perhaps, at the professional level. It is in this regard that *Sandesh* opens the doors to a new era in Bangla children's literature.

The travelogue penned by Upendrakishore for *Sakha* is titled “Darjeeling Prabasir Patra” (1891). Written during one of his earlier visits, he is yet to become “one of them” and refers to himself as a “prabasi”, or a non-resident. Upendrakishore does use the epistolary form, but he says he is writing the letter after his return from Darjeeling. Thus, while the letter may not contribute to a sense of proximity and immediacy, it is perhaps still being used to create a sense of accuracy and authenticity of the first-person traveller/author.

In many ways, the travelogue is typical of other travel-texts that describe Darjeeling – it describes the high altitude, the clouds that seem so close, and the cold climate. The landscape it produces is a view from above. The author looks down at the valley, describing the view of the station in Siliguri which seems like a white speck, the railway tracks which appear to be a scratch mark, and a winding river. The height becomes the framing device of the landscape (115–16).

Upendrakishore makes an interesting observation in this travelogue, saying that the first thing of note in Darjeeling is the coolies (116). He mentions specifically that young girls perform the task of carrying a heavy load up the mountain roads and jokingly admits that such a task is beyond his physical prowess (116).

The travelogue on Darjeeling by Upendrakishore published in *Sathi* (1893) recognizes the author as a traveller – a *bhramankari* rather than a *prabasi*. Rather than describing

his own travels, Upendrakishore here takes the pedagogical route—he spends most of his words describing the history and geography of the hills—a history that begins, it is worth noting, with the British presence in the hills (224). It is only at the end that he mentions how beautiful the place is in context of the benefits it has for health. The natural beauty, he says, makes people want to roam around, and since there is no transport, as there is in Bangladesh, everyone has to travel by foot which contributes to keeping fit (226).

Health is also the reason why Nalinibala Basu—the young author of “Himalay Bhraman” —has travelled to Darjeeling. In the first part of her travelogue serialized in *Sakha*, the author begins by addressing the reader. She says, “Readers of *Sakha*, all of you have seen the map of India. You have also seen the Himalayas in the north. Many of you know that there is a very healthy place called Darjeeling in the Himalayas” (40).

The opening follows travelogues written by adults that this thesis has discussed with its direct address to the readers and reference to the map of India. She goes on to say that during their eight-month long stay in Darjeeling they visited several



Figure 4.4

places, but in her travelogue, she wants to focus particularly on their trip to Phalut. Nalinibala writes, “I do not think I will be able to describe this well. Nevertheless, I shall try to write as much as I can. I hope you will enjoy reading it” (41).

This travelogue is one of the three I have found that is written by someone young (and originally in Bangla). That it is written by a young girl (possibly a teenager, for she mentions having an eleven-year-old younger brother) is, of course, interesting. More interesting still is the fact that her travelogue is not merely about sight-seeing, but quite an adventurous and arduous journey to Phalut from where the travelling party hopes to catch a glimpse of Mt. Everest. In this aspect too, it stands out in the corpus of travelogues published in juvenile periodicals.

This is the view she encounters once they reach Phalut after an arduous journey up the mountains by foot and on horseback. Nalinibala writes, “Just before sunset, we reached Tonglu – that mighty peak. Seeing mounds of snow upon our arrival at the bungalow, all the exhaustion of the journey was swept away. I climbed out to the high peak before dusk fell to see the wonderful sight before us. The town of Darjeeling looked lovely from here and the houses looked like white dots. Mount Everest stood tall before us, as though within touching distance” (170).

The second article— “Mussourie” —was published in *Sakha o Sathi* (1894). The author is one Snehalata Sen. There are multiple references throughout the text to how the views from the mountain resemble pictures. There is also the repeated admission that the author cannot truly describe the beauty of these scenes – not for the lack of skill but perhaps that same sense of surrendering to nature than Ray mentions in the context of his grandfather’s landscapes. Snehalata writes, for instance, of the view from Dehradun:

I have not the skill to describe that beautiful scene, but I shall never forget what I saw. In front of us, we could see the Mussoorie mountains, as though someone had painted a large picture on the sky. The high peaks of the mountains looked up at the sky and in some places, they were covered in mist – it seemed as though the mountain is wrapped in a white cloth (203).

This is how she describes the view from Mussoorie, “The view from Mussoorie is very beautiful. Look behind you, there are only mountains. Behind these mountains is a small snowy range painted like a picture against the blue sky” (204).

And soon after this, she writes:

Look in front of you, the plains have met the horizon far far away. To the south, the crystal-clear river Yamuna flows. The sun rays glitter as they shine on her surface. [...] Right below Mussoorie, one can see the valley of Dehradun like a beautiful little picture (204).

The final travelogue in this section turns away from the Himalayas to the hills of Assam.

Amritalal Gupta's travelogue to Assam, published in *Sathi* (1893), describes the natural beauty of the landscape—the tea gardens, the forest, and the mountain—and also the condition of the mines and the workers. Assam, in spite of its natural beauty and connectivity, had not emerged as a significant tourist destination in the late nineteenth century and as we shall see, not even in the early twentieth. The guidebook *From the Hooghly to the Himalayas* (1913), which contained an account of the “chief places of interested reached by the Eastern Bengal State Railway” described the “Hills of Assam” thus:

No part of India is more mysterious than the north-east, and if the tourist cannot hope to solve the secrets of the upper courses of the Brahmaputra, to penetrate the ill-defined frontier, or to stay a week-end with the inhospitable Abors, he may at least go off the beaten tourist track and go to the lovely hills of Assam” (42).

It is to these “lovely hills” that Gupta goes and spends a significant period of time in, living with friends or acquaintances. On his journey uphill from Dibrugarh, Gupta sees the tea gardens from the train, a journey he describes in the first instalment of the travelogue. Here, he describes the workers of the tea-gardens—the coolies—both men and women, who seem to him to be singing happily as they work. Gupta writes:

The tea-gardens are such a pleasant sight! A round patch of land is surrounded on all sides by dense forest; on that patch of land are rows and rows of tea plants with their young branches and green leaves. The coolie men and women are singing merrily as they work (146).

If landscape, both in art and literature, has made invisible the workers and their labour, here is an instance to apparently contradict that statement. Later on in the travelogue, Gupta will also talk about the journeying inside a mine and the condition of the workers there.

Mary-Ann Constantine uses the term ‘industrial picturesque’ to describe a series of paintings by the London-based artist John Hassell. In these prints, he is able to blend together the Welsh landscape and modern industry.<sup>26</sup>

In Gupta’s ‘industrial picturesque’, the plantation workers also seem to blend into the landscape organically. However, a closer look would reveal that this was far from the truth. For one, during the time of Gupta’s travels, many of the coolies in the plantation would have actually been from other parts of India. Jayeeta Sharma (2011) notes that with the transformation of the tea gardens into “a large-scale colonial operation” increasingly required “a reliable source of docile and cheap wage labour to do the coolie work” which the local populace was reluctant to perform (131). A solution, Sharma notes, was found when “the indentured labour system was extended to Assam” and “by 1867–68, two-thirds of the plantation labour force was already drawn from other regions of India” (131).<sup>27</sup>

It is uncertain, of course, which songs Gupta heard on his way up the hills, and if, like the Romantic poet, he bore the music in his heart long after the last strains had faded away. Unlike the author of “Nadiya Bhraman”, Gupta does not seem interested in collecting or documenting the songs. The songs Gupta heard may well have been the jhumur – a folk song sung in many parts of eastern India including Assam. The jhumur songs of the plantation workers described both their emotional and physical condition. Many of them were migrant workers and this was reflected in the songs.

“The songs,” notes Nitin Verma (2017), “map the transition of the Assam tea garden from being imagined as sites of hope” (in songs such as “Assam desher chah pat/Pani boli bar mitha” [Assam is the land of tea/ the water here is sweet] or the more popular “Chol Mini Assam Jabo” [Mini, let’s go to Assam]) to “becoming the sites of despair and difficulties” (in songs such as “Sardar bole kaam kaam/Babu bole dhorian/Saheb bole libo pithher chan” [The sardar says to work/the Babu says catch ‘em/ the Saheb says he’ll skin us alive) (116–17).

Verma further points out that the colonial imagery celebrated the plucking of the tea leaves as a joyful task – “as simple/pleasurable as picking flowers from a garden and therefore ideal for women” (117). This “romanticization/feminization” of the work masked the real nature of the labour that went into it (117). Verma also notes, and this is important in understanding Gupta’s gaze, that “such images were particularly influential in conditioning the perceptions about life and work on the Indian plantations of the metropolitan audience...” (118).

Leaving the tea gardens behind, Gupta’s train enters a dense forest in which, it seems, sunlight has not penetrated for centuries (146). In Gupta’s description, the landscape becomes mysterious and foreign – “as though it was a strange forest-land of dreams” (147).

The forest reminds Amritlal of folk tales and fairy tales he had heard as a child. For instance, when he sees a beautiful yellow flower, he is reminded of this snippet, “*Holde gachhe rupar pata, Phute tate sonar phul*” [“Silver leaves on a yellow tree, the tree has golden blooms”] (147). He thinks to himself, “Perhaps in a castle hidden away in this jungle, there is a princess like the ones I heard of from my grandmother!” (147) The allusion to the rhyme and the fairy tale told by his grandmother in a way domesticates the wilderness of the landscape – making it familiar, but also tinging it just enough with the Romance of nostalgia to make it appear fantastical.

Gupta marvels, in a tone that appears to be slightly sardonic, at the industrious nature and technical prowess of the English who have succeeded in laying railroads in this distant and wild animal-infested land and discovered oil and coal mines hidden in the caves. “No wonder,” he writes, “that they have been able to establish their reign over all of India!” (147).

The view from the top of the Tikak Mountains described in the second instalment of the travelogue offers a panoramic view of the surroundings. But the author/traveller’s own emotions at witnessing this scene is also worth noting. From a study of the travelogues, we can see that the landscape that appears before the traveller after a climb to the top of the mountain usually invokes an emotionally charged response. Before returning to this point, let us first look at Gupta’s response

to the landscape. He writes, “Witnessing this beauty around me, my heart was filled with such a sense of wonder that I began to think that I had left behind the world we have known since childhood and come to some *new* [emphasis mine] realm” (167). Novelty, as this thesis has noted, is often a significant element in the production of landscapes within the travelogue as well as the actual landscape witnessed by the author/traveller.

In concluding this section about journeys to the hills, this thesis will turn its attention to the process of secularisation of the mountains in the landscape of the Indian mind, especially the Himalayas. It will also briefly discuss the idea of the Romantic Landscape in this context.

Sandeep Banerjee and Subho Basu have traced this process of secularisation in their essay (2015) through a discussion of the travels of three Bengali bhadraloks – Debendranath Tagore, Jaladhar Sen, and Ramananda Bharati.<sup>28</sup> *Himalay* was published serially in the periodical *Bharati* and *Himaranya* was published serially in *Sahitya*.

Banerjee and Basu argue that over the course of time, from the mid-nineteenth century to the late nineteenth, the so-called secularisation of the space that is the Himalays takes place, in the travelogues of Jaladhar Sen and Ramananda Bharati, through the naturalisation of Hinduism as the “civil religion of India” (611). I would like to bring into this argument the idea of tourism, especially in the context of hill stations such as Darjeeling.

The development of travel as a business enterprise is situated, this thesis argues, within the wider context of the colonial (re)production of the hill towns as an escape from the summer heat of the plains and also a part of the emerging idea of health tourism. Writing in the last decade of the nineteenth century, many of the authors of the travelogues discussed in this section focus only on the sublime quality of the mountains before them. If they are aware of a “Hindu sacred geography”, their travelogues betray no such notions (610). The fact that they were all writing for a predominantly juvenile audience cannot be the only argument in support of this. As this thesis has noted in the previous chapter, the historical landscapes (re)produced in travelogues for children juxtaposed a glorious Hindu past with a ruinous Hindu

present, literal and metaphorical. The more general juxtaposition of religion with landscape would not have been entire unnatural (once you overlook the pun). Tillotson notes that in Indian landscape art in the twentieth century, the mountains, as “a natural boundary [...] do not just frame and protect India, they seem to define it. They are its most distinctive – and picturesque – terrain” (2021, 45).

The common thread that seems to run through these travelogues—from Nalinibala to Snehalata, from Satyaprasad to Upendrakishore, is the wonder they feel at the sight of the snow-capped ranges before them—in Tillotson’s words – the “picturesque terrain”. Bennike has also noted that in the travel writings of the Bengali *bhadralok* [and *bhadramahila*], “the Himalayas were recast in terms of natural beauty rather than supernatural power” (65–66) and that, like their colonial counterparts, they “fashioned themselves as ‘secular sojourners’ visiting the Himalayas for leisure” (66).

Other than the picturesque mode of representation, the description of the Himalayas in these travelogues also produce Romantic landscapes. It is possible to argue, drawing from the travelogues mentioned in this section, that such texts often contained both modes of representation. In case of describing the view from a train, of passing through a forest, or a view of the town from far away, the authors tend to use the picturesque mode. But when it comes to describing the mountains far away, they slip into a Romantic lexicon.

The two travelogues discussed next section are both places of pilgrimage. But I want to draw attention to the ways in which the authors (re)produce the natural landscape in their travel texts – moving (away) from the religious to the secular.

Sharat Chandra Dutta begins his travelogue about Baidyanath (1885) by describing travel as a far better leisure pursuit compared to wasting time playing cards and chess during the holidays. He writes, “Many understand how pleasurable it is to travel during the holidays rather than kill time playing cards and chess. But the benevolence of Goddess Laxmi not being equally distributed, many of us do not get an opportunity to travel to new places” (215).

For them, he suggests short trips to places near Calcutta. We should note that he is not advocating here the pedagogical benefits of travel, rather, he ascribes to travel the Bengali word *amod* – fun or entertainment.

Sharat Chandra explicitly states that he does not want to talk about the religious aspects of Baidyanath, which is a well-known site of Hindu pilgrimage, but, rather, he wants to focus on the natural beauty of the place and the emotions it evoked in him. For such information, the author says, there is an essay by Rajendralal Mitra, published in the journal of the Asiatic Society which one can read (215).

A shadowy, hazy landscape is what he begins with. Nature here is wild and overgrown.

On one side, a broken, uneven field stretches for a long distance – in the middle of that there are some black rocks lying like elephants. Or perhaps some wild trees have cast such a shadow on it that sitting on that rock in the afternoon sun and looking at the hazy trees in the horizon or a mountain guarding the border, it feels as though a detached hazy shadow hangs in the sky, on the leaves of trees (215).

In this description of the landscape, the author is able to create a frame by creating distance. But in describing the ‘Tapovan’ hill, Sharat Chandra has to place himself within the landscape for that is the demand of geography and he looks down from a height at the valley below him:<sup>29</sup>

It is not within my powers at all to describe the madness that fills the heart when one looks down from the highest peak of the mountain. [...] Between the two peaks lies the valley, covered in a deep green, as though it is the swing of nature. It is as though someone has spread a dotted green duvet from one mountain to the other (217).

The subject of the letter of Pramada Charan Sen (the first editor of *Sakha*) published posthumously in 1885 is his journey to Parashnath – a Jain pilgrim site. However, it is the natural surroundings of Parashnath to which the author, who signs himself as a “traveller” [bhramankari] and not a tirthajatri or pilgrim, draws the reader’s attention. As a traveller, then, Pramada Charan focuses on the journey—the arduous climb uphill—and the wonderful scene that meets the eye from the mountaintop. He writes, once again invoking the metaphor of a picture:

I looked up and saw that the sky was blue – deep blue. [...] I looked around and saw the clouds floating like mist in the air. We have crossed the limit of the clouds! [...] When I looked around, I saw that the small mountain looked like a forest, the huge trees looked like grass, and the other places looked like a coloured picture (24).

## Seascape

The relationship between sea and travel is an ancient one and in the context of Bengal, as we have seen, one that was hotly debated in the nineteenth century. From Bengal, the closest sea-side destination in the nineteenth century would have been Puri, which had long been a site of pilgrimage as well. Writing in the early years of the nineteenth century, Walter Hamilton describes the reaction of the pilgrims to the first sight of the temple of Jagannath who “fall on the ground to worship it” (quoted in Introduction to *Tirtha Bhraman*, 5).<sup>30</sup> However, as Simonti Sen has noted, with the secularisation of travel and also the development of health tourism, the sea-side became a tourist destination for the British as well as the Bengali middle class in the second half of the nineteenth century (11). For instance, Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri mentions that he has come to Puri to improve his health (845) and that because of the railways, a lot of people are now easily able to and do travel to Puri for purposes beyond a pilgrimage (843).<sup>31</sup> However, he also mentions that the pilgrims, even if they are very poor, will not leave Puri without visiting the sea, which they also consider to be divine in nature (849). Punyalata Chakrabarti’s childhood memoirs also mentions their visit to Puri, possibly the same one as Upendrakishore’s.<sup>32</sup> She writes about the devotees on the train raising their folded hands to their foreheads when they catch a glimpse of the temple as well as the sea (95). However, such a devotion to the sea would have been restricted only to Puri which continued to be a site of pilgrimage.

In *Abodh Bandhu*, one of the early periodicals in the nineteenth century to slowly break out of the pedagogic mould of its predecessors, the eminent Bengali poet Biharilal Chakrabarti, who was also the editor and proprietor of the periodical, published a poem titled ‘Samudra Sandharshan’ (1868) which was a part of a longer work called *Nisarga Sandarshan*.

Biharilal's poem describes the vastness of the sea, but his own identity as a citizen of a colonised nation and the relationship of the sea with imperialism does not escape him. For in the sea is an island called England, which has, in the words of the poet, "looted our freedom" as Ravana kidnapped Sita (107). It is interesting to note here that the ocean is thought of as one body of water with no borders. The reference to the *Ramayana* returns again to the poem when Biharilal refers to the conquest of Lanka (108).

Besides its spatial vastness and apparent erasure of borders, temporally, Biharilal writes, the sea remains unchanged, untouched by the ravages of time. He draws, thus, a direct line from Manu in the Satya Yuga to him in the present day, standing before the very same sea (108). While there is no direct allusion to the sea as Divine, Chakrabarti alludes to markers of Hinduism, thereby making the sea a part of that "Hindu sacred geography" (Banerjee and Basu, 2015, 610).

In describing the sea, Chakrabarti paints a picture of sound and fury. Not only does he describe the sea as violent in appearance, he also describes the sounds of the waves as akin to rolls of thunder. Chakrabarti writes, "What is this vastness that lies before me/Blue waters stretching to the sky/Rolling and crashing continually/As though it will swallow everything" (106).<sup>33</sup>

The violent image of the sea is also invoked by Nagendranath Gupta in his travelogue "Prabaser Chithhi".<sup>34</sup> The title of the travelogue indicates that the author has spent a considerable amount of time away from home. Nagendranath is in Karachi. Here, he describes both the calmness of the sea at Clifton as well as its violent form in the monsoon. When they visited Clifton some time ago, the author says, the sea was extremely calm. He writes, "For as far as the eyes could see, it was calm, still, blue, sombre, and huge. The roar of the sea drowned in the wind and was barely audible. [...] The waves are so small, they gurgle along in such a way, that it is hard to imagine them as the gigantic waves of the sea" (226). Monsoon, however, changes all this.

"Humungous waves foaming and frothing at the mouth. The waves swell up and break down and scatter in the form of foam. [...] If you want to see the dance of death of the sea, this is the time," he writes (226–27).

Another aspect of Nagendranath's letter that this chapter will focus on in conclusion is the identity of the traveller as a prabasi. Distance from home—temporally and spatially—allows the author to ruminate in his letter, citing homesickness.

“It is not as though I've forgotten about my home because I am in Sindh,” he writes, “Rather, in my imagination, those images are far clearer” (225). What are these images? “The tress,” writes Nagendranath, “the house, the river, the light of the full moon” (225). But when he writes about the monsoons of his homeland, Nagendranath does not forget his sense of humour. Especially in describing the rains in Kolkata where “even two drops of rain turn the streets into rivers and the houses into islands (225).

Nagendranath's sarcastic pen comments also on the idea of home and abroad, desh and bidesh. He writes that one often hears the idea of an “United India” these days – a united voice, an united nation from Himalay to Kanyakumari. However, he notes, take a step outside the Bengal Presidency, and the word ‘prabas’ slips easily from the tongue, betraying an element of vacuousness in that idea of unity (225). Nagendranath is the only traveller who reminds us, explicitly, of the politics of the identity of the author/traveller within the framework of an emerging discourse of nationalism. This chapter has tried to locate that identity of the traveller/author in analysing the natural landscapes (re)produced by them in their travel writing.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Tour of Doctor Syntax: In Search of the Picturesque*, 1903. This is based on the seventh edition of the text published by Ackerman in 1817. The name of the poet does not appear in the title pages.

<sup>2</sup> Combe's poem was supposedly a satirisation of Gilpin's travels.

<sup>3</sup> Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Inquiry into Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, 1823. The text was first published in 1757.

<sup>4</sup> Carl Thompson, "The Picturesque at Home and Abroad". <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-picturesque-at-home-and-abroad>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-picturesque-at-home-and-abroad>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-picturesque-at-home-and-abroad>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-picturesque-at-home-and-abroad>

<sup>8</sup> This was pointed out to me by Dr. Rajarshi Ghosh during a semi-formal conversation about the subject of my dissertation.

<sup>9</sup> Jyotirindranath Tagore, "Barishaler Patro", *Shraban*, 1292 BS (1885), pp. 159–65. Page numbers from the Dey's edition.

<sup>10</sup> It is not within the scope of this work to trace the history and implementation and discuss in detail the impact of the Permanent Settlement in Bengal. For more, see Ranajit Guha's seminal work, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement*, 2016, and *Chirasthayee Bandobaster Sutrapat*, 2010; Shekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition*, 2004; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India: India 1880s–1950s Environment, Economy, Culture*, 2015; and Sibaji Bandyopadhyay, *Gopal-Rakhal Dvandasamas*, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> See also, Sutapa Dutta, *Disciplined Subjects: Schooling in Colonial Bengal*, 2021, and "Colonial Textbooks and National Consciousness in British India", 2022, pp. 827–45.

---

<sup>12</sup> For more on this, see Subho Basu, “The Dialectics of Resistance: Colonial Geography, Bengali Literati and the Racial Mapping of Indian Identity,” 2010, pp. 53–79, and Sutapa Dutta, *Disciplined Subjects: Schooling in Colonial Bengal*, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Some of the texts I have looked at but not discussed are – Akshay Kumar Dutta, *Bhugol*, 1763; *Banglar Bhugol O Itihasa*, 1875; H. Blochmann, *Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal*, 1873; Kalidas Moitra, *Geography ba Bhugol BIGNAPOK*, 1263 BS; Rajendralal Mitra, *Prakrito Bhugol*, 1776; Tarinicharan Chattopadhyay, *Bhugol Bibaran, Part II*, 1857.

<sup>14</sup> *Second Geography*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1857.

<sup>15</sup> Ebenezer Lethbridge, *An Easy Introduction to the History and Geography of Bengal*, 1874, and *Banglar Bhugol O Itihasa*, translated from *An Easy Introduction to the History and Geography of Bengal*, 1875.

<sup>16</sup> W. H. Arden, *A Short Geography of Bengal*, 1895.

<sup>17</sup> The travelogues published by *Balak* in its one-year run are, in chronological order – “Darjeeling Jatra” and “Kanchan Shringa” by Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay; “Dosh Diner Chhuti” by Rabindranath Tagore; “Barishaler Patra” by Jyotirindranath Tagore; “Prabaser Chithhi” by Nagendra Gupta; “Baidyanath” by Sharatchandra Dutta; “Baraf Pora” by Rabindranath Tagore; “Karachir Chithhi” by Nagendranath Gupta; “Nadiya Bhraman” by Shrishchandra Majumdar; and “Gaya” by Prabodhchandra Ghosh. Of these, Rabindranath’s second essay, “Borof Pora”, is reminiscences of the poet’s stay in England.

<sup>18</sup> The three travelogues here chosen are because of their destinations and because they each display a different purpose. Rabindranath is holidaying, Majumdar is presumably travelling for work, and Ghosh is interested in the religious sites.

<sup>19</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, “Dosh Diner Chhuti”, *Asharh*, 1292 BS (1885), pp. 106–11.

<sup>20</sup> In Chapter 2, this thesis has discussed ‘paschim’ as a travel destination.

<sup>21</sup> Niharika Debi, “Palamou Bhraman”, *Bhadra*, 1308 BS, pp. 79–80.

<sup>22</sup> Gargi Gangopadhyay, “Reading Leisure: A Print Culture for Children in Colonial Bengal”, 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, “Bangadesher Krishak”, in *Bankim Rachanabali, vol. II*, edited by Jogesh Chandra Bagal, 1985, pp. 287–314.

---

<sup>24</sup> Satyajit Ray, “Upendrakishore”, in *Prabandha Sangraha* edited by Sandip Ray, 2015, pp. 407–09. The essay was first published in *Jalsa* in 1963.

<sup>25</sup> Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, “Megher Muluk,” 1321 BS (1914). The travelogue was published across three issues – Asharh (70–74), Shraban (106–09), and Bhadra (143–45).

<sup>26</sup> Mary-Ann Constantine, “John Hassells, Wales and the ‘industrial picturesque’”.  
<https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/john-hassell-wales-and-the-industrial-picturesque>

<sup>27</sup> See also, Nitin Verma, “Coolie Acts and Acting Coolies: Coolie, Planter and State in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Colonial Tea Plantations of Assam”, 2005, pp.49–72; Gabriel LaFavre, “The Tea Gardens of Assam and Bengal: Company Rule and Exploitation of the Indian Population During the Nineteenth Century”, 2013, pp. 16–31  
<https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/trinitypapers/21>,

<sup>28</sup> For Debendranath Tagore’s accounts of his travels, see his autobiography (published posthumously). I have referred to the edition edited by Satish Chandra Chakrabarti, 1960. Debendranath also wrote several letters during his travels. See, for instance, the compilation edited by Asis Khastagir – *Debendranath Thakur: Chithipatra*, 2022; Ramananda Bharati, *Himaranya*, 2021. Also see, Nilanjana Sikdar Datta, “Bengali Hindu pilgrims and travellers to the Himalayas from the late 19th to the late 20th century”, 2020, pp. 49–59; Rabin Pal, “The Himalayan Travels of the Bengalis”, 2010, pp. 155–64.

<sup>29</sup> Sharat Chandra writes that some of the locals claim that this is the site of the sage-poet Balmiki’s hermitage. He, however, is quick to dismiss the claim, saying that “it is only a ploy to pocket some pennies” (217).

<sup>30</sup> Originally published in *The East India Gazetteer*, 1885, p. 455.

<sup>31</sup> Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri’s travelogue on Puri was published serially in *Mukul*. The first instalment was published in Year 11, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1312 (May–June, 1905), pp. 28–30. It was subsequently published in the Ashar (44–47), Bhadra (76–80), Ashwin (88–95), Kartik (105–09), and Agrahayan (126–28) issues of that year. I have consulted the digitised copies on the British Library website. I am referring to the reprint in *Upendrakishor Samagra*, edited by Sunil Jana, 2004, pp. 843–65.

<sup>32</sup> Punyalata mentions that their father (Upendrakishore) was ill at this time (95).

<sup>33</sup> Abhishek Sarkar has pointed out that, “[...] in ‘Samudra Sandarshan’, stanzas 29 to 28 are closely modelled on [‘Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean – roll!’ *Childe Harold’s*

---

*Pilgrimage*, IV, 179] the same excerpt from Byron. Stanza 29 begins ‘*godao godao tumi apnar mone* in obvious imitation of ‘Roll on [...] roll!’ although the verb *godao* in this context is a literal translation of ‘roll’ and alien to the Bengali usage. Biharilal’s poem is [...] an eloquent and spirited celebration of the ocean, unmarked by *Childe Harold*’s restlessness and malaise.” See, “Reading Byron in Nineteenth Century Bengal”, *The Byron Journal*, 2018), pp. 49–61. <https://doi.org/10.3828/bj.2018.7>

<sup>34</sup> Nagendranath Gupta, “Prabaser Chithhi”, *Bhadra*, 1292 BS (1885), pp. 225–28.

## Conclusion

*The courts are closed and my home is without clients. The Dhapa Mail blew its loud whistle on Circular Road and, startled, I found my elder son pouring over the railway timetable instead of geometry. The younger one, haunted by the spirit of an engine, constantly rotated his elbows, made a face like a mole, and kept saying – jhuk jhuk jhuk jhuk. My heart grew restless.*

- Rajshekhar Basu, 'Kochi Sangsad', 115

*She has seen a picture of a train – it's there in one of Apu's books. It is very long with many wheels and an engine in the front where they light a fire and smoke comes out. The train is made entirely of iron, even the wheels – not like a bullock cart. There are no straw huts next to the railway tracks. There can't be. They'll catch fire. When the train runs, fire comes out of its engine, that is why!*

- Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay,  
*Pather Panchali*, 113

## Wonder and Wander

Rajshekhar Basu's "Kochi Sangsad" was first published in a collection of short stories entitled *Kajjali* in 1928. The same year, Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay's novel *Pather Panchali* began to be published serially in the periodical *Bichitra* edited by Upendranath Gangopadhyay. The first instalment was published in Ashar, 1335 BS and the last in Ashwin, 1336 BS. It was published in book-form in 1929. Although not explicitly stated in the novel, temporal markers within the text show that it is set

in the early twentieth century, with Apu, the protagonists' birth being around the fin de siècle.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis began with the idea of locating children within the culture of travel and the corpus of travel writing in Bangla in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Introduction has elaborated upon the origin of this idea and the methodology with which it sought to elucidate upon it. Here, I wish only to reiterate the central concern.

The culture of travel and travel writing in Bengal and in Bangla has received significant scholarly attention over the past few decades. Several travelogues in Bangla have been translated into English and many have been reprinted. The same holds true for juvenile periodicals published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>2</sup> The focus of this thesis lies at the intersection of the culture of travel, travel writing, and juvenile periodicals, having identified a small gap in this very important and interesting body of work. This gap has to do, as I have mentioned, with the position of the child within this spectrum.

The two excerpts quoted above demonstrate the reaction of children to the railways and the train. The two children of the narrator of Rajshekhar Basu's story are clearly familiar with the train and journeying on it. With the onset of the autumnal holidays, one pours over the timetable, presumably as a hint to his parents, while the other pretends to be a train himself. Contrary to the image of these two young, urban, boys, Durga's ideas about the railways in *Pather Panchali* seem to belong to another century altogether. She has not, and never will, see a train, let alone journey in one. It is Apu, in whose books she sees for the first and only time the picture of a train, who will make his way to the city aboard the vehicle of modernity.

In writing for children, Bangla literature uses the trope of wonder as well as technology and the two are not often separate. This sense of wonder also lends itself naturally to travel and, by extension, to travel writing. As readers of these travelogues and in encountering the landscapes produced by them, the child is expected to feel a sense of wonder and a longing for wandering. Radha, in Bibhutibhusan's short story "Dakgari", is awestruck when she sees a train at the Ranaghat station:

What Radha saw and what she found, I do not know, but the train, with its beautiful, well-dressed passengers, and the clean, shiny, and beautiful first- and second-class compartments created in her heart a sense of happiness mixed with wonder, and excitement, and enthusiasm. It was as though the Darjeeling Mail was an exciting poem or a song sung by a talented singer... When the train left, Radha felt as though she was a new person (405).<sup>3</sup>

Periodicals for children in Bangla in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also published short pieces on the history of the railways or, in some cases, even published photos of trains and railway stations with no accompanying text.<sup>4</sup> This is an example of how the young readers were introduced to a technological wonder and it was also a way to inculcate in them an interest in science and technology. This interest was closely linked to the ideas of education in particular and bringing up a child in general. The child, often envisioned in the future tense, would require a scientific bent of mind in service of the nation. The enterprise of the British, in this regard, was one to be emulated, even as some members of the Bengali intelligentsia were aware of the fact that it was established primarily for the easy transportation of soldiers to various parts of India.<sup>5</sup>

### **Education and Entertainment**

The travelogue written for the child also served the purpose of educating the child in the garb of entertainment, especially in the late nineteenth century. While it is true that beginning with Pramadacharan Sen's *Sakha*, children's periodicals in Bengal were turning away from the didactic tone of their predecessors and moving toward a more informal tone, the educational or instructional purpose was not wholly done away with. Jaladhar Sen's travelogue on Delhi, which was published in *Sakha*, and Abala Basu's travelogues to cities such as Lucknow and Ayodhya published in *Mukul*, are examples, among others, of the ways in which education was combined with or even veiled by entertainment.

The other aspect of the travelogue was also to encourage its young readers not simply to wander, but to travel with a purpose. Getting to know one's country, and,

more specifically, the history of one's country, was one of the primary motives. Ramananda Chattopadhyay, this thesis has noted, had a blueprint for how travel could be used to educate school students as well as the illiterate masses about the history of the nation.

Also embedded in the very act of travel itself was a sense of adventure associated strongly with a sense of masculinity. The Bengali man in particular was criticised and even ridiculed by the British as 'effeminate' as opposed to the 'manly' Englishman. This spirit and sense of adventure becomes more pronounced in the second decade of the twentieth century, in the figure of someone like Shankar of Bibhutibhushan's *Chander Pahar*, for instance. Prior to that, in the travelogues that have been examined in this thesis, Abala Basu writes about European explorers, for instance, citing the examples of David Livingstone and Fridtjof Nansen. It is worth noting that the periodicals did not always target a particularly male readership. Whether or not the authors of the travelogues thought young girls to be suitable adventurers, it is certain that they would be considered travellers because the figure of the woman traveller was slowly becoming a common sight with the development of modes of transport and the culture of travelling, even in the early years of the twentieth century.

### **Gender and Travel**

Following from the discussion above, particularly noteworthy is that of the travelogues central to this thesis, only a handful are written by women. Among them, Abala Basu is the only author with multiple travelogues to her name.

The tonal difference between the male and the female gaze in the context of travel writing has received significant critical attention in the Western context or in the context of British women travelling to India in the colonial period.<sup>6</sup> One immediate difference that we can note in these travelogues is the fact that some of the women from Britain gained access to the *andarmahal*, the domestic space of elite Indian households. This access provided them with the tool of comparison – drawing out the differences between the condition of women in England with their (subordinate) counterparts in India.<sup>7</sup> The tool of comparison is also used by Abala

Basu, for instance, in her description of the lives and customs of women in other parts of India, or by Krishnabhabini Das in her travelogue about Britain.

It has not been within the scope of this thesis to discuss the travelogues to other parts of the world written by Bengali women. A rich body of literature inaugurated by Krishnabhabini's *Englande Bangamahila [A Bengali Lady in England]*), a study of this genre of travelogues allows readers to understand the ways in which Bengali women were carving out their ideas of the self in the land of the coloniser.<sup>8</sup> In cases like Krishnabhabini's, who, along with her husband, was ostracised for crossing the proverbial kalapani for foreign shores, it also provides us with the opportunity of analysing the larger socio-cultural issues around travel and its engagement with gender and gender roles. Krishnabhabini's role as a mother, for instance, is an important aspect of her text and travel.<sup>9</sup>

Within the context of writing for children, women hold an interesting position. In the last decade of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, there was a consolidated effort amongst the Bengali intelligentsia, including Rabindranath Tagore, to collect and bring out in print the folk and fairy tales as well as the nursery rhymes of Bengal. The most famous and enduring of these enterprises was certainly, as has been noted by several scholars, the collection of tales compiled by Dakhsinaranjan Mitra Majumdar. *Thakurmar Jhuli* was also made more famous, especially in the later years, by the Introduction written by Rabindranath, to which scholars have paid closer attention. Gargi Gangopadhyay has noted that beyond the actual stories, the appearance of the book also captured the spirit of Swadeshi. She writes:

Besides its native fairy tales, the 'swadeshiness' of *Thakurmar Jhuli*, was also reflected in and complimented by the unmatched illustrations of the book. Done by Mitra Majumdar himself, the drawings were transferred to wood blocks by skilled engravers like Priyogopal Das, Aurobinda Das, Kunjabehari Pal and Hemchandra Bandyopadhyay. [...]

The entire volume was elaborately decked with a profusion of floral motifs like lotus petals or conch shells and used intricate lunettes of mayurpankhi [the peacock-headed boat] or elephants as

headpieces. These were drawn from and strongly reminiscent of traditional alipana patterns: an art profoundly and fundamentally Bengali. At a time when book illustration and design was a predominantly West-influenced domain, *Thakurmar Jhuli* exuded an indigenous quality in its very appearance and captured the essence of a Bengali domesticity in its diction as well as in its design.<sup>10</sup>

*Thakurmar Jhuli* was not Dakhsinaranjan's only endeavour. Indeed, this was a part of a four-volume series compiled by him under the title of *Matrigranthabali*. This allusion to the 'mother' (matri) in the title, it could be argued, refers both to the sources of these texts as well as the Motherland – in this case, not the nation, but Bengal. The other volumes in the series are *Thakurdadar Jhuli*, *Thandidir Thole*, and *Dadamoshaier Thole*.

Other works of compilation in this vein include the rhymes compiled by Rabindranath and the more extensive work in this domain conducted by Jogindranath Sarkar. The thesis discusses both these works.

The point to be made here is the absence of women in the task of collection and compilation. While the source of these texts remains, as the compilers themselves remind the readers, the mothers, and grandmothers of Bengal, and even as a text like *Thakurmar Jhuli* visually references a form of art associated primarily with women, at least at the time of its publication, the journey from oral to print erases the women in the process of (re)production. This is especially ironic in the context of children's literature—oral or in print—since it was considered to be the domain of the woman. However, within the context of a world where women were mostly being advised by men on how to rear children, the irony seems to fade away or strengthen itself, as the case may be. It is also worth pointing out, as M. O Grenby has done, that the erasure of the role of women in the production of these literatures in print was common to many cultures across the world (2009, 11).

In *Centuries of Childhood*, Phillippe Aries has noted that the rapid growth of children's literature in print is simultaneous to a growing concern of both the society

and the parents about the child as well as a psychological interest in the child (See Grenby, 7)<sup>11</sup>. While the latter may not be explicitly visible in the late nineteenth century, this thesis has made note of the societal concern about the child and childhood as reflected in the many articles published in periodicals whose primary audience were women.

While women may have been erased in the journey from oral to print literature of folk tales, fairy tales, and nursery rhymes collected and compiled by men, they were not entirely absent from the canvas of children's literature in Bengal. The periodical press provided women with the space and opportunity to write, and in case of Gnanadanandini Debi, even to edit. Gnanadanandini's privileged position notwithstanding, it was an important moment, not just in the domain of Bangla children's literature, but within the larger context of Bangla literature in general. In his Introduction to a reprint of *Balak*, Parthajit Gangopadhyay has argued that Rabindranath, who was officially the Manager of the periodical, was also, in reality, the Editor, rather than an assistant to Gnanadanandini. With no real evidence of this, Gangopadhyay's deduction draws, possibly, from the number of articles Rabindranath contributed to the periodical, and the fact that *Balak* had to merge with *Bharati* (the periodical edited by Swarnakumari Debi) once Rabindranath had to give up his managerial duties. While the role and contribution of Rabindranath in the publication of this periodical is undeniable, it seems rather unfair to Gnanadanandini Debi to assume that her name on the title page was ornamental rather than a reflection of reality.

*Balak* survived for one year. Through that year, it published a wide range of articles in prose and also published poetry. With the exception of the Aग्रahayan issue, the periodical published something by a woman in all the other issues. Six different women wrote for *Balak* – Narendrabala Debi, Pratibhasundari Debi, Gnanadanandini Debi, Sarala Debi, Hiranmoyee Debi, and Swarnakumari Debi. There is also an article by a girl whose name does not appear and is simply mentioned as 'Srimoti' or 'Miss'. Her article, published in the Shraban issue, is about the system of examinations in educational institutions. Of the other women authors, Narendrabala deserves special mention here because she is the first known Bengali woman to write and publish articles about science (Gangopadhyay, Introduction). Narendrabala's

articles were published in the first, second, third, and fifth issues. It is also worth noting that women were writing on a wide range of subjects. The authors in *Balak*, for instance, write about science (Narendrabala Debi), physical exercise (Gnanadanandini Debi), and famine (Sarala Debi).

Shanta and Sita Debi were important contributors to the domain of Bangla children's literature, as were Punyalata Chakrabarti and Sukhalata Rao in later decades.<sup>12</sup> It is worthwhile to trace the contribution of women in the domain of Bangla children's literature with a particular focus on periodicals where a larger number of women would be writing. This conclusion has focussed briefly on *Balak*, but a study of a wider pool, beyond the scope of the present work, could also throw light upon the range of topics women were writing on.

### **Writing Children, Children Writing**

The peculiarity of children's literature, of course, is the fact that it is almost exclusively composed by adults. But it is in the juvenile periodicals that we do find examples of young adults taking up the pen, though not very often. In case of travel writing also, the figure of the child appears either as a companion or is imagined as the future traveller in case of the reader. It is in memoirs and autobiographies that some have recorded their own childhood experiences of travel, especially by train – Rabindranath Tagore and Punyalata Chakrabarti are two instances cited in this thesis.

In 1876, a chapbook titled *Bhraman Brittanto* was published by one Kashinath Bhattacharya from Hooghly.<sup>13</sup> It is a travelogue written by a student of the Normal School in Hooghly, describing the experience of travelling from Chunchura to Munger with his fellow students, chaperoned by a school-teacher mentioned in the text only as the 'pandit moshai' – another commonly used term for the school master. The text is written in the form of a journal. They begin their travels on the third of March and end on the fifth.

The author, Haricharan Bandyopadhyay, a third-year student of the Normal School, begins, "There are not words enough to describe the happiness one feels when one travels to various lands and various places and witnesses the fantastic creations of

God” (1) – imbuing travel with a sense of spiritual endeavour even if the purpose of the journey is not a pilgrimage. While that is true, the students do visit a number of religious sites during their journey including Sitakunda in Munger and Baidyanath. They also visit a historical site – Mir Qasim’s fort (14–15). Besides visiting these sites, the students also marvel at the natural beauty of the locations they visit. The author describes the trees and flowers that grow on the mountains they climb. He also provides a description of the people of these places. This includes a description of the way women in Munger are dressed (9). He also makes a note of the agricultural practices of these places, mentioning, for instance, “Just as in our land there is primacy of cultivating paddy, here they cultivate wheat” (12). There is a common idiom to all the descriptions: the idiom of comparison or relation. For instance, when they alight at Sahebgunj at night and finally catch the first glimpse of the place early in the morning, the author says, “We have come very far to see the paschim land and through the night we were as though blind and could see nothing of the beauty of the foreign land. And now, as though to satisfy our curiosity, the Sun God shone his light upon the world” (5).

The distance between Chunchura and Sahebgunj is around three hundred and sixty kilometres. By rail today, it takes around six hours to cover. While to the modern traveller it would certainly not seem like much, in this 1876 text and many other travelogues about places within India, the destination is often referred to as ‘bidesh’ – the word usually reserved in Bangla for a foreign land.

### **The Eye of the Beholder**

The geographical vastness of the Indian subcontinent (more so in the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century) meant that travelling, even by the railways, from one state to another was a long journey, akin, perhaps, to travelling from one country to another – as it tragically would be a few decades later. However, the sense with which the term ‘bidesh’ is used in these travelogues (as distinct from ‘bilet’ – England) is in relation to the place of origin. Same is the case with denoting the towns and villages on the Chhota Nagpur plateau as ‘paschim’. The formation of

the Self and the Other is reflected thus in geographical terminology and colloquial speech.

Another term used by some of the authors of the travelogues discussed in this thesis (Rabindranath, for instance, in “Dosh Diner Chhuti”) is ‘new’. The novelty of the landscape is something that the author/traveller is struck by and it is this novelty that also helps invoke a sense of wonder in the traveller who then renders that landscape into words and onto the page as the author. Sometimes, the text would also be accompanied by images and, on occasion, maps.

As print technology develops, so do these images. The black and white block prints, woodcuts, linocuts, and lithographs are slowly replaced by coloured engravings and eventually colour plates. These also make way for the photograph in the twentieth century. Images form a significant part of children’s books and are considered to be one of the ways in which children can be attracted to books and reading. It is possible to distinguish a book meant for children from a book meant for adults by looking at the pictures they contain. So too was the case for periodicals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The editors, who were dedicated to the cause of bringing out literature in print for a juvenile audience, were concerned with the physical appearance of their fare. Some of them wanted to use colour plates but could not do so due to a lack of funds. However, as opposed to images that accompanied works of fiction, images accompanying the travelogues were different and have to be analysed through a different lens. Here, we return to the idea of the landscape.

As this thesis has discussed, following W. J. T. Mitchell and others, the landscape is curious in the sense that it is the mode of representation as well as that which is represented, and as such, it is the position of the viewer in relation to the landscape which becomes interesting in its (re)production. Travel and landscape share an intrinsic and fraught relationship. This thesis has traced the ways in which power plays a significant role in the production and reproduction of landscapes, focussing also on the element of ‘land’ in the term. In this work, I have shown how the landscapes (re)produced in the travelogues also relate to landscapes encountered by the child-reader in other texts – primarily, school texts and nursery rhymes. The school texts also help us to understand the kind of history these readers were learning

at school and how, if at all, the history in the travelogues were different to this discourse. In trying to examine this, the present work has found that they were not wholly dissimilar, except perhaps in instances where there is a pronounced critique of British rule and administration. In a more subtle sense, however, this thesis has argued that the very act of writing history (albeit with many faultlines) in these travelogues is an act that must be read within the larger context of the development of the idea of nationalism. This thesis has not been able to incorporate a study of the many articles published in juvenile periodicals about the geography of India and Bengal, as well as articles that introduced young readers to distant lands and its people, or the articles about foreign explorers and adventurers. These are vast in number and a detailed study would require a separate work altogether.<sup>14</sup>

Landscape painting did exist in India prior to colonial rule; however, it is only with the advent of British rule and exposure to the Western art form that the landscape, in its modern sense of the term, developed as an artistic tradition in India. In the context of Bengal, Abanindranath Tagore played a significant role in this regard. It is worth noting that the landscapes being (re)produced by the artists of the Bengal school from the second decade of the twentieth century incorporated not just an influence of the West, but more significantly, an influence of the East – using, for instance, the Japanese ‘wash technique’ which endowed these canvases with a lightness both literal and metaphorical.

This was also the time when Japan was emerging as a site of travel for Indians. Abala Basu, Hariprabha Takeda, and Saroj Nalini Dutt are some of the women who travelled to Japan after the First World War.<sup>15</sup>

The tradition of visually recording travel can, as this thesis has noted, trace itself back to the development of landscape painting. Or, to put it differently, landscape is the first form of art that is intrinsically linked with travel. This thesis has discussed this relationship, both in case of the development of the form in the West and in India, in the third and fourth chapters. We see that the primary intention of the landscape artist was not to provide a documentation of the act of travelling itself.

It is not clear when documenting travelling itself emerges as a trend. One is tempted to argue that it happens with the emergence of the camera. With this new

technology, for the first time, the traveller could be present within the frame in a more physical sense. Photography and its products open up a new avenue of thinking visually about travel, landscape, and the role of the photographer.

However, what painting and photography have in common is the seeing eye. The presence of the artist and the photographer in the frames they create and fill become profoundly important in assessing the visual forms. In studying the travelogues and the landscapes they (re)produce, this work has considered the social position of the traveller/author which determines the places to which they travel and how they represent and respond to them. This has been placed within the larger context of the development of nationalism in Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

In thinking visually about travel, this thesis has not been able to consider two specific forms – the patachitra and railway advertisements. It has also not been able to discuss the rich tradition of temple art in Bengal, which include numerous depictions of travel.

### **After the War**

*Sandesh* changed the landscape of children's periodicals in more ways than one. One of these, as Khagendranath Mitra and others have noted, is that it marked the beginning of a company publishing periodicals rather than an individual or a religious institution as had been the norm. This section turns its attention to the periodicals published between 1914 and 1947 with a particular focus on the major periodicals of the time.<sup>16</sup>

The first major periodical in this period is *Mouchak* (1920) The first editor was Sudhir Chandra Sarkar. Khagendranath Mitra has noted that *Mouchak* published poems by Kazi Nazrul Islam, Bande Ali Miyan, and Jasimuddin (168–69).<sup>17</sup>

The next major periodical was *Shishu Sathi* edited by Asutosh Dhar, the first issue of which was published in 1922. Khagendranath Mitra has noted that the periodical made great strides in terms of printing images and two names associated

with the periodical in this regard are referred to by Mitra– Phani Gupta and Purnachandra Chakrabarti (172). Mitra also notes that the periodical, published from Calcutta, soon became extremely popular and was read by young people in mufassil and rural areas of Bengal (171). Another important periodical in the 1920s was *Ramdhanu*, founded by Manoranjan Bhattacharya and edited initially by his father Bishweshwar Bhattacharya. This periodical was successful and ran for a long time, and was one of few such periodicals that were not backed by a business organisation (Mitra, 175).

In the 1930s, Sudha Sen edited a periodical titled *Kishori*, mentioned here because it was edited by a woman, which, as we can see, was still a rarity in the domain of juvenile periodicals (Mitra, 180). Another periodical edited by a woman was *Papiya* (1928), and was published from Dhaka.

The most well-known periodical from this decade was *Rangmashal*, whose first editor was Premendra Mitra. Its first issue was published in 1937. The periodical ran for twelve years and was also edited by the likes of Hemendra Kumar Roy, Kamakshi Prasad Chattopadhyay, and Debiprasad Chattopadhyay. While all its editors have contributed in some way or form to the world of children’s literature, we can turn the spotlight briefly on Hemendra Kumar Roy and his editorial in *Rangmashal*. Mazumder (2019) points out that in this editorial to the first issue, Roy “emphasizes how European children reaped the real-life benefit of a variety of learning experiences” (259). On the contrary, the colonised child, as though ‘stifled in a narrow alley’, had no means of escape. In this way, Mazumder argues, Roy is “obliquely critiquing colonialism as a prison for colonized youth and presenting adventure and travel magazines and books as its key.” By doing so, Roy “portrays the ability to imagine travel and emulate travellers as a heroic and necessary form of escape” (259). It is possible, then, to read Roy’s own adventure stories in this light. In a larger sense, as this thesis has mentioned earlier, the emergence and development of such full-fledged stories also endows travel with a more pronounced sense of adventure. More importantly, perhaps, the protagonist [usually male] is also a young person, someone the target reader could identify with more easily.

The first Bangla juvenile periodical with a Muslim editor was possibly *Balak* – published weekly from Barishal from 1901. This was edited by A. K. Fazlul Haq. In

1938, Muhammad Nasiruddin published and edited a periodical called *Shishu Saogat*, which was published for over a decade. Mitra says that after 1947, it was available in East Pakistan for some time, besides being available in West Bengal till around 1949 (181).<sup>18</sup>

### **“A little world borne upon its back”**

The development of travel and modes of transport was and continues to be made possible by the labour of unnamed masses.<sup>19</sup> Some of this history has been documented, especially in case of the railways, for instance.<sup>20</sup> The focus of the present work is also afflicted with the malady of exclusions and absences, often enforced by the (un)availability of data and resources or its complete absence. The discussion in this thesis is restricted to the middle- and upper-class experience of travelling and their reaction to the new mode of transport – the railways, not being able to take account the stories of travel from other sections of society who would not have had the means to bring forward their own experiences in print. Occasionally, these experiences come to light in texts such as *Hutom Pnyachar Naksha* or *Kii Mojar Koler Gari!*

In 1896, Bholanath Chunder published his English travelogue *The Travels of a Hindoo to Various Parts of Bengal and Upper India*. In the third chapter, Bholanath, who has presented himself as an obedient servant of the empire, writes about his experience of travelling by train, using the familiar tropes of wonder and speed.

In concluding this thesis, I want to draw attention to the idea of exclusion that Chunder mentions in his travelogue unironically. He writes, “All along the road, the villages still turn out to see the progress of the train, and gaze in ignorant admiration at the little world borne upon its back” (141).<sup>21</sup>

This thesis has tried to be aware of the labour that went into producing that “little world” and the tracks that carried it and the labour that produced the land which was then (re)produced as landscapes in literature and art.

Finally, and uncharacteristically, I would like to think of the many omissions and exclusions in this thesis in a positive light. Hopefully, they open up new avenues of research, some of which, I hope I also have the opportunity to be a part of.

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> When Apu is studying in Kolkata, he must be over sixteen. Bibhutibhushan writes, “But soon Apu realised that Kolkata was no Dewanpur. People here do not care about each other. Ever since the war broke out in Europe a few months ago, clothes have become very expensive...” *Aparajito*, 1959, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> For references, see relevant chapters of this thesis.

<sup>3</sup> Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay, “Dakgari”, in *Bibhuti Rachanabali*, vol. V, 1956, pp. 397–06.

<sup>4</sup> This has been discussed in the chapter on the culture of travel in Bengal.

<sup>5</sup> Kalidas Maitra makes a note of this in his work *Bashpiya Kol o Bharatbarshiya Railway* published in 1855 from Srerampore, pp. 46–47. Also quoted in Ramen Kumar Sar, *Rail: Unish Sataker Bangali Jiban o Sahitye*, 2012, p. 104. There are also specific references in contemporary newspapers and periodicals about how the railways were used in quelling the Santhal Uprising of 1855. See the compilation in Sar, pp. 200–02.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women’s Travel Writing*

*and Colonialism*, =1991; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel writing and Transculturation*, 1992; Inderpal Grewal, *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire and the Cultures of Travel*, 1996; Indira Ghose, *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze*, 1998; and *Memsahibs Abroad: Writings by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India*, 1998; and Sutapa Dutta, ed., *British Women Travellers: Empire and Beyond, 170–1870*, 2020.

<sup>7</sup> See, Sutapa Dutta, “The Memsahib’s Gaze: Representation of the Zenana in India”, 2020, pp. 120–36.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Jayati Gupta, *Travel Culture, Travel Writing and Bengali Women, 1870–1940*, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Krishnabhabini travelled to England with her husband, leaving behind her six-year-old daughter. The child was married off before Krishnabhabini returned home eight years later.

---

Not only did Krishnabhabini have to bear the brunt of social ostracisation for travelling abroad, her daughter, who probably felt a sense of abandonment, refused to see her before she died an untimely death. See, Jayati Gupta, *Travel Culture, Travel Writing and Bengali Women, 1870–1940*, 2021.

<sup>10</sup> See, <http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/ThakurmarJhuli.php>

<sup>11</sup> Aries's argument is from *Centuries of Childhood* (1960), reference from Grenby, op cit.

<sup>12</sup> The works of Shanta and Sita Debi include – *Hindustani Upakatha* (possibly first published in 1907, the year a review of the work appeared in the October issue of *Review of Reviews* according to the Introduction to the first edition of the text). The work was a translation of *Folk-tales of Hindusthan* by Srish Chandra Basu. I am referring to the edition published by Mitra o Ghosh in 1989. Sita Debi also published a translation called *Niret Gurur Kahini*. The original stories had been written in Tamil by an Italian Jesuit named Beschi who arrived in India in the eighteenth century. This work was subsequently translated by Benjamin Babington as *The Adventures of the Gooroo Noodle* (See, the Introduction to the Mitra o Ghosh 1989 edition). The Mitra o Ghosh edition also carries another collection of stories by Sita Debi – *Kathasaptak*. *Niret Gurur Kahini* and *Hindustani Upakatha* were both originally illustrated by Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri. Sukhalata Rao, writes Chandak Sengoopta, “had a particular bent for fantasies and fairy tales, many of them taken from foreign sources” (309). She translated English nursery rhymes and fairy tales from all over the world. Sukhalata also wrote stories which drew on indigenous material, modelled on folk tales. She was encouraged to write from an early age and contributed to *Sandesh* from its inception (Sengoopta, pp. 309–10). Her works include, for instance, *Golpo Aar Golpo*, *Golper Boi*, and *Nanan Desher Rupkatha*. Sukhalata's sister Punyalata Chakrabarti's works include her memoir *Chhelebelar Dinguli* and a collection of short stories called *Chhotto Chotto Golpo*.

<sup>13</sup> Haricharan Bandyopadhyay, *Bhraman Brittanto*, published by Kashinath Bhattacharya from Hooghly, 1283 BS (1876).

<sup>14</sup> See, for instance, Stella Chitralkha Biswas, “Space, Nation and Colonial Childhood: A Critical Study of Bengali Juvenile Periodicals”, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.18261/blft.13.1.12>

<sup>15</sup> For more on Japan as a site of travel, see Gupta, 2021.

<sup>16</sup> My main source here is Khagendranath Mitra, *Satabdir Shishu Sahitya 1880–1960*, 1999. For a full list, see Appendix II.

---

<sup>17</sup> The poem “Khukir Dukhho” by Nazrul was published in the sixth (Ashwin) issue of the second year. Bande Ali Miyan’s poem “Khuku” was published in the second issue (Asharh) of the fifth year (Mitra, pp. 168–69).

<sup>18</sup> For other periodicals edited by Muslims, see Appendix III.

<sup>19</sup> The industrialisation of travel and the emergence of tourism would expand this labouring mass which eventually finds itself categorised under the tag of “service”.

<sup>20</sup> See, notably, Ian. J. Kerr’s seminal work *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*, 1995. The work significantly dedicates a chapter to the resistance of workers (pp. 169–85).

<sup>21</sup> Bholanath Chunder, *The Travels of a Hindoo to Various Parts of Bengal and Upper India* 1869, p. 141.

**Appendix I: List of Periodicals (1818–1915) and Where to Find Them**

<b>Periodical</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>First Published</b>	<b>Place of Publication</b>	<b>Holdings</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<i>Digdarshan</i>	John Clarke Marshman	1818	Srerampore	ukBL, ukIOL, auANU and inNL 1818 (Apr–Dec), 1819 (Jan – March), 1820 (Jan – Apr); inBSP 1818 (v. 1, 1–12), 1819 (v.2, 13–16), inUTPR 1819 (v.2, 13–26); inNCE 1818; ukCUL, ukIOL, and ukBL 1822 (reissue); usCTHT 1818 (Apr)+	First juvenile periodical in Bangla published by the Baptist Mission Press. Reprint: Compilation and Introduction by Nimai Pal. Kolkata: Haramoni, 2014.
<i>Pashwabali</i>	W. H. Pearce, John Lawson, and Ramchandra Mitra	1822	Calcutta	ukBL; inNL (second phase)	Published by the Calcutta School Book Society. One of the earliest illustrated periodicals in Bangla. It was published in two phases. Ramchandra Mitra, editor of the second phase, was possibly the first Bengali editor of a periodical.
<i>Gnaynoday</i>	Ramchandra Mitra and Krishnadhan Mitra	1831	Calcutta	ukIOL 1832–33 (v.1, 1–10), inNL 1832–33 (v.1, 1–9)	Published articles on history and geography as well as moral tales.
<i>Bibidhartha Samgraha</i>	Rajendralal Mitra, Kaliprasanna Sinha	1851	Calcutta	inBSP, inCSSS, inAS, ukIOL, v1–v7; ukBL 1857 (v.4 #43), 1858 (v. 5 #57); inUTPR 1851 (v. 1) 1853–54 (v.3) 1860 (v.6) [Incomplete vols. 3, 6]	Illustrated monthly with a focus on popularising science published by Vernacular Literature Committee. In July, 1861, the editor Kaliprasanna Sinha published a

					piece on <i>Nil Darpan</i> which resulted in the government funds of the Committee being stopped.
<i>Bidyadarpan</i>	Priyamadhab Basu and Jogendranath Chattopadhyay	1260 BS	Calcutta		<i>Sambad Prabhakar</i> praised the efforts of the young editors of this monthly periodical. Among other things, it published moral tales, articles on history, and poetry.
<i>Satyapradip</i>		1266 BS	Calcutta	ukBL v.1–v.12	A monthly periodical that ran for five years. It was published by the Christian Vernacular Education Society.
<i>Rahasya Sandarbha</i>	Rajendralal Mitra and Prandhan Dutta	1269 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1862–1866 (v.1 – v.4), 1870 (v. 5), 1872 (v.6 – v.7); inCHAI 1862–1872 (v.1–v.7); ukIOL 1862–1864 (v.1 – v.3) #1–30; ukBL 1866 (v. 4) 44–45; inNL 1866–1872 (v. 4– v. 7) Incomplete sets	A continuation of <i>Bibidhartha Samgraha</i> . It was published monthly.
<i>Abodh Bandhu</i>	Jogendralal Ghosh, Biharilal Chakraborty	1867	Calcutta; Printed at Calcutta School Book Press	inCSSS 1867–69 (v.1–v.3); inBSP 1867 (v. 1 #1–6), 1868–1869 (v.2 – v.3)	Rabindranath described it as ‘Morning Star’; first recreational periodical for children; first appeared in 1864 and then after a break in 1867
<i>Jyotiringan</i>		1869	Calcutta; Published by Calcutta Tract Society	inCSSS and inBSP 1869–1873 (v.1–v.4); ukIOL 1869–1870 (v.1 #1–6)	Affiliated to the Calcutta Tract Society; Illustrated magazine for women and children.
<i>Bishwadarpan</i>	Mohanlal Bidyabagish	1872	Calcutta		Fortnightly

<i>Balak Bandhu</i>	Keshab Chandra Sen	1878; 1881	Calcutta	inBSP vol. 1 #8–18, 20–22	An illustrated juvenile magazine published by Bharatbarshiya Brahma Samaj. It was published fortnightly and each issue usually contained a few poems by young boys under the sub-head 'Balaker Rachana'. Their full names were not printed. It also published news from around the world. The periodical published moral tales, articles on science, mathematics, grammar, stories, and poetry. The language was lucid.
<i>Balak Hitaishi</i>	Janakiprasad Dey	1881	Calcutta		Monthly.
<i>Aryakahini</i>	Siddheshwar Mukhopadhyay	1881	Calcutta		First-known Bangla weekly periodical for juvenile readers.
<i>Sakha</i>	Pramadacharan Sen, Sibnath Shastri, Anandacharan Sen	1883–1894	Calcutta	inBSP and inCSSS 1883–1892 v.1–10; inCHAI 1890–1893 v.8–v.11; inNL 1883–1894 v.1–v.12	<i>Sakha</i> is seen as the earliest secular juvenile periodical and the first children's magazine to make a mark in a major way. The first issue of the first volume states that the desire to publish this monthly stemmed from the "lack of such a periodical in our land". The declared aim of the periodical was the character development of children and expanding their knowledge. Reprint:

					Chattopadhyay, Aruna editor. <i>Sakha, Sakha o Sathi</i> . Kolkata: Kallol, February 2002.
<i>Balika</i>	Akhsay Kumar Gupta	1883	Dhaka		
<i>Suniti</i>	Bhudhar Chattopadhyay	1883	Varanasi		Published from Varanasi Dharmamrito Jantralay. The aim of this monthly periodical was to invoke an Aryan spirit in boys and young men. It ran for one year.
<i>Balyabandhu</i>	G. H. Rouge	1884	Calcutta		The aim was to preach Christian values
<i>Bhojbaji</i>	Amritalal Basu	1291 BS	Calcutta		Monthly. The periodical published articles on magic and chemistry.
<i>Balak</i>	Gnyanadanandini Devi	1885–1886	Calcutta	inNL vol.1; Hard Copy; inCSSS; inMAIH 1885 (v.1)	The illustrated periodical aimed to cultivate literary practice among the young boys of the Tagore family. However, it did move beyond the confines of Jorasanko in terms of contributors. The “manager” of the periodical was Rabindranath Tagore. <i>Balak</i> often published articles on serious topics otherwise not considered to be suitable for children. This goes to show that the periodical did not infantilise its readers. Reprints: Kolkata: Dey’s Publishing, 1417 BS; Parthajit

					Gangopadhyay editor. <i>Balak</i> . Kolkata: Parul, 2018.
<i>Bharati o Balak</i>	Swarnakumari Devi, Dwijendranath Tagore	1886	Calcutta	inCHAI 1886–1891 (v.1–v.6); inCHNGR 1888-1892 (v.3-v.7); inBSP 1886–1892 (v.1-v.7)	Continuation of <i>Balak</i> – a periodical targeting women and children.
<i>Shikkha</i>	Priyanath Basu	1888			Monthly periodical published by the students’ committee in Bangaon.
<i>Sukhipakhi</i>	Saradaprasad Basu	1888	Jessore		Monthly
<i>Srihatta Sambad</i>		1295 BS	Srihatta		
<i>Srihatta Suhrid</i>		1889	Srihatta		Monthly. Ceased publication for a few years and started again in 1891.
<i>Shukshari</i>	Nibaran Chakrabarti Kabyatirtha	1295 BS	Jessore	inBSP v.1	A monthly periodical that supported the cause of Hindu revivalism and opposed the stand taken by Congress.
<i>Santosh Pratima</i>		1296 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Shishubandhab</i>	G. H. Rouge	1890			According to Bani Basu’s bibliography, this monthly was published in 1889. Published by the Baptist Mission Press/
<i>Chhatrasakha</i>		1299 BS	Kachhar		
<i>Rabi</i>	Shashibhushan Basu	1890	Calcutta	inBSP 1890 vol. 1	Published as an organ of the students’ organisation Chhoto-Jagulia Chhatra Sabha

<i>Prakriti</i>	Prabhatchandra Sen	1891	Dhaka	inBSP 1891 v.1	A journal of natural science for young readers
<i>Chhatramitra</i>	T. B. Gwyn	1891	Calcutta?	ukCUL 1892 (Sep) – 1893 (Apr)	Mouthpiece of the native Christians.
<i>Sathi</i>	Satish Chandra Sen, Bhubanmohan Ray	1893	Calcutta	inBSP 1893 v.1	In the first issue, Satish Chandra Sen wrote that this monthly would provide “overall education” to its young readers. Works of young contributors were published in this illustrated periodical. It was published for one year.
<i>Sakha o Sathi</i>	Bhubanmohan Ray	1894	Calcutta	inBSP 1894–1897 (v.1–v.4); inCHAI 1895–1896 (v. 2 – v.3)	Born from the merger of two separate periodicals – <i>Sakha</i> and <i>Sathi</i> . Many of the famous authors of this time contributed to the periodical. This list includes, for instance, Troilokyonath Mukhopadhyay and Jaladhar Sen. Chattopadhyay, Aruna editor. <i>Sakha, Sakha o Sathi</i> . Kolkata: Kallol, February 2002. Mitra, Ashoke Kumar and Subimal Misra editors. <i>Sakha o Sathi</i> . Reprint. Kolkata: Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2015.
<i>Mukul</i>	Shibnath Shastri, Hemchandra Sarkar	1895	Calcutta	inNL 1895–1914 (v. 1–v. 20); Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Library; inCHAI 1897–1899 (v. 3 – v. 5); inBALI 1899–1902 (v.5– v.8);	One of the longest running monthly periodicals. Its list of contributors includes Rabindranath Tagore, Jogindranath Sarkar,

				inCHNGR 1908 (v. 14); inBSP 1895 (v.1), 1898–1900 (v.4–v.6), 1902–1904 (v.8–v.10), 1906 (v.12), 1908–1909 (v.14–v.15), 1914 (v.20) [Incomplete v.5, 20]	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri, Girindramohini Dasi among others. Many of the women of the Brahmo Samaj played an important role in its inception. Reprint: <i>Sab Sera Mukul</i> , edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata: Sadharan Brahma Samaj. 2018.
<i>Shaishab Sakha</i>	Guruprasanna Dasgupta	1896	Calcutta		
<i>Snehamoyee</i>	William Carey [?]	1303 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Snehamoyee</i>	Ibrahim Arhi and K. M. Das	1896	Printed in Calcutta		Published in Serampore.
<i>Anjali</i>	Rajeshwar Gupta	1898	Chittagong	inCSSS 1898–1899 (v.1); inBSP 1898 v.1	Dedicated to moral upliftment of children. Mostly published dry, didactic essays.
<i>Kusum</i>	Some students	1898	Calcutta		
<i>Sakhi</i>	Baikunthanath Das	1900	Calcutta	inNL, inCHAI, and inBSP 1901 v.1	For young women and girls
<i>Prakriti</i>	Basantakumar Basu	1900	Calcutta	inBSP 1900–1903 (v.1–v.4); inCHAI and inUTPR 1903 v.4	Published by the students for the students with the idea of developing friendly relations amongst students of different colleges through this forum. One of its primary aims was to improve the language skills (Bangla) of the students.

<i>Alo</i>	Anandacharan Sen	1900	Calcutta	inBSP 1900–1901 v.1–v.4 [Incomplete]	Affiliated to Eden Hindu Hostel; by the students for the students
<i>Asha</i>	Hemantakumar Bandopadhyay, Nanigopal Mukhopadhyay	1902	Calcutta	inCHNGR 1902–1904 (v.1–v.3); inBSP 1902 (v.1 #10)	Monthly
<i>Atithi</i>	Pramathanath Ray	1902	Printed in Calcutta; published in Dhaka	inBSP vol.1 #2,5,9	Illustrated monthly
<i>Renu</i>	Girijakumar Basu	1903	Midnapore	inBSP 1903 v.1, #1	One of the earliest literary magazines from Midnapore; aim was to provide mass education and motivate both Hindu and Muslim school children to cultivate their literary talents
<i>Balak</i>	A K Fazlul Haq	1308 BS	Barishal		
<i>Usha</i>	Upendranath Bhattacharya	1904	Calcutta	inNL 1904–1905 (vol.1–v.2) vol.2 Incomplete; inBSP vol. 1 Incomplete	Monthly
<i>Prakriti</i>	Debendranath Sen	1907	Calcutta	inNL 1907–1914 v.1–v.8 Incomplete v. 4 and 8; inBSP 1907– 1913 v.1–v.7 Incomplete v 6 and 7	Illustrated monthly
<i>Chhatrasakha</i>	Dibakar Bhattacharya, Manmathnath Basu	1907	Calcutta	inBSP 1907 v.1 #1–6	Aimed to make the students' community aware of socio-political situation and the significance of the Swadeshi movement

<i>Balyasakha</i>	Bishnucharan Chattopadhyay, Shashibhushan Chakrabarti	1908	Calcutta	inBSP, 1908 v.1	Aimed to enlighten children about their natural surroundings and to inspire love for the motherland
<i>Toshini</i>	Anukulchandra Shastri	1910	Dhaka	inBSP 1911–1919, v.2–v.10	An illustrated monthly. A translation of <i>Robinson Crusoe</i> by Hemchandra Raychaudhuri was published in this periodical.
<i>Balyashram</i>	Taraprasanna Ghosh	1910	Calcutta	inBALI, 1910 (v.1, #3)	Monthly
<i>Sopaan</i>	Hemchandra Dutta	1910	Dhaka	inCHNGR 1911, v.2; inBSP 1911–1913 (v.2–v.4) Incomplete v.2	Illustrated monthly that published stories, travelogues, articles on science and history, and translations.
<i>Priti</i>	Pranshankar Sen, Biharilal Ray	1911	Calcutta	inNL 1911–1914 (v.1–v.4) Incomplete v.2–4; inBSP 1911–1913 (v.1–v.3)	Brahmo Mission Press; Published by students to encourage their members in literary activity and develop an environment of harmony and cooperation
<i>Shishu</i>	Baradakanta Majumdar, Amritalal Bandopadhyay	1912	Calcutta	inCHAI 1912–1913 (v.1–v.2); inBSP 1912–1916 (v.1–v.5) Incomplete sets; inCSSS 1912–1913 (v.1–v.2)	Patron: Raja Manindrachandra Nandy. The editor's name was not mentioned in the periodical. Often published religious propaganda and spoke in favour of the British. At one point, the periodical had more than 10,000 subscribers. Despite its popularity, it was published only for around five years.

<i>Balak</i>	J.M.B. Duncan, G. S Paterson, W. Alexander, and Lalitlochan Datta	1912	Calcutta	inBALI, 1912 v.1 Title page missing	Monthly periodical that survived for eight years. One of the aims of the periodical was the dissemination of Christian values.
<i>Dhruba</i>	Dhirendranath Ghosh	1912	Calcutta	inCHNGR 1913 (v.2); inBSP 1912– 1913 (v.1–v.2) Incomplete sets	Monthly periodical that aimed at character building of the youth with Hindu idealism
<i>Arun</i>	Himadrichandra Gupta	1912	Howrah;	inBSP, 1912 (v.1, #1 and 2)	Printed in Calcutta; Most of the contributions were made by students
<i>Uchhash</i>	Bhabataran Basu	1912	Calcutta	inBSP, 1912 (v.1, #2–3)	Monthly literary magazine
<i>Sandesh</i>	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	1913	Calcutta	inCSSS 1913–1926 (v.1–v.14); inBSP 1913–1916 (v.1–v.4); inCHAI 1913–1923 (v.1–v.11)	First Bangla juvenile periodical published by a business enterprise. Important developments in print technology. After the death of Upendrakishore, his son Sukumar Ray took up the editorial mantle. Reprints: Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore editor. <i>Sandesh</i> Year 1. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata: Parul, 1415 BS. Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore editor. <i>Sandesh</i> Year 2. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata: Parul, 2018.

<i>Chhatro</i>	Shashibhushan Mukhopadhyay	1914	Calcutta	inBSP 1914 (v.1, #1–4)	Organ of the Bangiya Chhatra Sammilani, a non-political students' organization
<i>Balyashram</i>	Tarapasanna Ghosh Bidyaratna	1320 BS	Calcutta		

#### Sources:

Basu, Bani. *Bamla Sisusahitya Granthapanji*. Kolkata, Bangiya Granthagar Parishad, 1924.

Gupta, Abhijit. "The First Lion in Bengal." <https://www.bl.uk/early-indian-printed-books/articles/the-first-lion-in-bengal>

Mitra, Khagendranath. *Shatabdir Shishu Sahitya 1818–1960*. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 1999.

Mukhopadhyay, Asokhnath Mukhopadhyay. *Early Bengali Serials 1818–1950*. Kolkata, K. P. Bagchi and Company, 2004.

<http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/index.php>

<https://bangiyasahityaparishat.org/library/>

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/pashwabali>

<https://www.fid4sa.de/en/subjetcs/digital-editions/bengali>

<https://www.ub.uniheidelberg.de/Englisch/fachinfo/suedasien/zeitschriften/bengali/bibidhartha.html>

**Abbreviations:**

1. inBALI – Bali Sadharan Granthagar
2. inBSP – Bangiya Sahitya Parishat
3. inCHAI – Chaitanya Library
4. inCHNGR – Chandannagar Pustakagar
5. inCSSS – Centre for Studies in Social Sciences
6. inMAIH – Maihari Sadharan Pathagar
7. inNL – National Library of India
8. inNCE – National Council of Education, West Bengal
9. inUTPR – Uttarpara Jaikrishna Public Library
10. ukBL – British Library
11. ukCUL – Cambridge University Library
12. ukIOL – India Office Library
13. usCTHT – Trinity College Library
14. auANU – Australian National University Library

**Appendix II: List of Bangla Juvenile Periodicals: *Mouchak* to *Shuktara***

<b>Periodical</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>Year of Publication</b>	<b>Place of Publication</b>	<b>Holdings</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<i>Mouchak</i>	Sudhir Chandra Sarkar	1327 BS	Calcutta	inCHAI 1920–1981 (v.1–v.62); inNL 1920–1927 (v.1–v.8) [Incomplete vol. 7]; inUTPR 1936 (v.17); inCHNGR 1930–1931 (v.11–v.12), 1934–1936 (v.15–v.17), 1939 (v.20 #1), 1940 (v.21), 1942–1948 (v.23–v.29) [Incomplete v.25];	An important periodical in the twentieth century. Published the works of some of the most well-known authors of the time, including Rabindranath Tagore, Abanindranath Tagore, Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay, Kazi Nazrul Islam among others.
<i>Angur</i>	Muhammad Shahidullah	1327 BS	Calcutta	inBSP (v.1 #1–5, 7–9, 11–12)	Published by Mubarak Ali. The first Bangla juvenile periodical to be edited by a Muslim. The editor, Muhammad Shahidullah was a well-known linguist and teacher. Reputed authors, including Rabindranath, contributed to the periodical.
<i>Anjali</i>	Fanindranath Pal and Dhirendranath Mukhopadhyay	1327 BS	Calcutta		Monthly periodical
<i>Anjali</i>	Bidhubhushan Basu	1327 BS	Calcutta	inChai 1920 (v.1); inNL 1920–1921 (v.1–v.2)	Illustrated monthly. Many important writers contributed to the periodical.
<i>Amar Desh</i>	Nagendranath Gangopadhyay and Shishir Kumar Mitra	1327 BS	Calcutta	inNL 1921–1926 (v.1–v.6); inMAIH 1926 v.6; inCHNGR 1921 (v.1), 1925–1926 (v.5–v.6); inBSP 1922–1923 (v.2–	Aimed at the moral upliftment of its young readers, this periodical advertised that the education of children would “remain incomplete”

				v.3), 1924 (v.4 #1–2), 1926 (v.6 #1)	if they did not subscribe to the magazine.
<i>Mita</i>	Akhsay Chandra Sarkar	1328 BS	Chuchura		
<i>Kishor</i>	J. M. B. Duncan, Lalitlochan Dutta	1328 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1921 (v.1 #1)	The illustrated monthly published translations as well as original stories, articles, and poems. Published by Calcutta Christian Textbook Society.
<i>Shishu Sathi</i>	Asutosh Dhar	1329 BS	Calcutta	inCHAI 1922–1924 (v.1–v.3); inCHNGR 1930 v.9, 1932–1933 (v.11–v.12), 1935–1943 (v.14–v.22), 1945–1948 (v.24–v.27) [Incomplete: v.9, 11, 12]; inBSP 1922–1929 (v.1–v.8); ukSOAS 1935 v.14?	The first issue did not carry the name of the editor. The illustrated monthly had a long and successful run. Phani Gupta and Purnachandra Chakrabarti were two important illustrators associated with this periodical.
<i>Khoka Khuku</i>	Satyacharan Chakrabarti and Kaliprasanna Dasgupta	1330 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1923–1924 v.1–v.2	Published by Debendranath Bhattacharya. Bimal Ghosh (Moumachhi) was one of the important contributors to this periodical. Approved by the Education Department.
<i>Rajbhog</i>	Sudhangshushekhkar Gupta and Satendrashankar Dasgupta	1331 BS	Dhaka	inBSP 1924 (v.1, #2–4, 9–12); 1928 (v.2, #1–10)	Well-known children’s authors contributed to the periodical. It published puzzles, comics, news, prose fiction etc.
<i>Chhatrasakha</i>	C. S. Patterson	1331 BS	Calcutta	ukSOAS 1935 (v.7 #3); inBSP 1928 (v.1 #1), 1930–1931 (v.2–v.3) [Incomplete v.2]	Published from the YMCA. It did not achieve popularity and was short-lived. Other than literary pieces, it

					also published articles on how to make household utilities.
<i>Arun</i>	Sitesh/ Gitesh Chandra Khan	1333 BS	Rangpur	inBSP 1930 v.1, #1–11	The monthly published travelogues, articles on science and history etc.
<i>Phuler Benu</i>	Prabhatkumar Basu, Gunendranath Mukhopadhyay, Shishirchandra Basu	1333 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1926 v.1, #3, 8–10	The sole purpose of the monthly was to “offer joy and happiness to the young readers through literature”. Contributors included Abanindranath Tagore.
<i>Pattari</i>	Birendranath Ray	1334 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1927–1928 (v.1– v.2) [Incomplete sets]	Edited by Mohinimohan Mukhopadhyay in its second year and published by Madhusudan Nath. Popular periodical that published travelogues, translated works, puzzles etc.
<i>Alpana</i>	Sunirmal Basu and Hiren Basu	1334 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Jadughar</i>	Premankur Atarhi and Girijakumar Basu	1334 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Benu</i>	Bhupendrakishor Rakhsit Ray, Sunilchandra Sengupta, Prasannakumar Pal	1334 BS	Calcutta	inBALI 1929 (v.3), 1930 (v.4 #1), 1931 (v.5 #2); inCHNGR 1931 v.5 [Incomplete]; inBSP 1929 (v.3 #4, 1931 (v.5 #4, 6)	Published by Brajabihari Barman. Eminent authors contributed to the periodical. The periodical sought to inspire patriotism in its young readers.
<i>Ramdhanu</i>	Bishweshwar Bhattacharya, Manoranjan Bhattacharya,	1334 BS	Calcutta	inBALI 1932–1972 (vol.5– vol.45) Incomplete: 6, 8, 11, 19, 22, 35, 37, 45; inBSP 1928–1932 (v.1–v.5)	A popular periodical, continued to be published intermittently for over four decades. It was not funded by any business enterprise. Contributors

	Kshitindranarayan Bhattacharya				included Sunirmal Basu, Premendra Mitra, Buddhadeb Basu, Leela Majumdar.
<i>Shishu Mahal</i>	??	1334 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Tarun</i>	Sudhir Chandra Sarkar	1335 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Tarun Shakti</i>	Anandakumar Chakrabarty; Rajbala Debi	1335 BS	Singbhum	inBSP 1928 (v.1 #1–6, 11–13, 22)	Fortnightly independent political journal for the youth.
<i>Chitra</i>	Mohanlal Gangopadhyay and Satikanta Guha	1335 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Papia</i>	Bibhabati Sen	1335 BS	Dhaka	inBSP v.1 #1–2	Quarterly
<i>Chhotoder Lekha</i>	Rohinikumar Mondal	1335 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Mash Poila</i>	Khsitish Chandra Bhattacharya and Akhil Niyogi	1336 BS	Calcutta	inCHAI 1928–1930 (v.1–v.3), 1935 (v.8, #1 and 2); inCHNGR 1930 v.3; inBSP 1928–1930 (v.1–v.3)	Published by Kulaja Sahitya Mandir. It was the cheapest periodical of this time. It was very popular but could not make a profit.
<i>Golpogatha</i>	Lalitmohan Ghosh, Soumyendramohan Mukhopadhyay, Ranjit Das	1336 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1929 v.1 #1–5	Mostly published short stories. It tried to publish stories for young readers as well as adults. It tried to make its young readers aware of the evils of provincialism.
<i>Naba Alok</i>	Purnachandra Das, Panchugopal Dey, Gobindalal Dey	1336 BS	Calcutta	inBSP v.1 #1	Published by Purnachandra Das. Renowned authors contributed to the periodical.
<i>Jamjam</i>		1337 BS	Calcutta		

<i>Saaji</i>	Lalit Mohan Mukhopadhyay	1338 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Adarsha</i>	Hrishikesh Bhowmik	1338 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Ankur</i>	Priyanath Das	1338 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Shishu Bharati</i>	Yogendranath Gupta	1933 [1340? BS]	Calcutta	inCHAI 1933–1943 (v.1–v.11); inCHNGR 1933–1941 (v.1–v.9)	Monthly children’s periodical.
<i>Mohan Benu</i>	Rabindranath Sen	1341 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Kishor</i>	Hirendranath Guha and Kamakhsiprasad Chattopadhyay	1343 BS	Calcutta	ukBL Tagore Special Ussue 1941; inCSSS-F 1948 (Paus 1, 1355 BS)	Published by Hirendranath Guha.
<i>Pathhshala</i>	Narendra Deb, Suryanarayan Bhattacharya, and Satindranath Laha	1343 BS	Calcutta	inCHAI 1937–1940 (v.1–v.4), 1943–1950 (v.7–v.14); inUTPR 1940 v.4; inCHNGR 1937–1940 (v.1–v.4) [Incomplete sets 3–4]; inBALI 1939 (v.3 Part 2 #8–10, 1941–1942 v.5–v.6 [Incomplete sets]; ukBL 1937 v.1, 1939–1945 (v.3–v.5, v.7–v.8);	Contributed by eminent authors on various topics of educational value
<i>Rangmashal</i> [ <i>Nabaparjay</i> ]	Premendra Mitra	1344 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1937–1946 (v.2–v.10); inCSSS 1937–1946 (v.2–v.10)	Other editors of the periodical were Hemendrakumar Ray, Satikanta Guha, Debiprasad Chattopadhyay and Kamakshiprasad Chattopadhyay. It was popular and well-circulated.
<i>Koishorika</i>	Shailendra Guha Ray	1344 BS	Calcutta		

<i>Koishorok</i>	Jogendranath Gupta, Sudhangshu Gupta	1344 BS	Calcutta	inCHNGR 1937–1940 (v.1– v.4)	Popular monthly periodical published by Mokshadaranjan Bhattacharya.
<i>Bikash</i>	Debabrata Chakrabarti and Arunchandra Niyogi	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Maktab</i>	Shakhwat Hussain	1344 BS	Dhaka/Calc utta	inBSP 1930 v.1, #1–2	An important periodical in which reputed authors (mostly Muslim) contributed poems and stories and short essays on religious conduct. The language was lucid
<i>Chhelekhela</i>	Suhridkumar Chattopadhyay	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Jolchhobi</i>	Prabhatkiran Basu	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Jomjom</i>	Mainuddin Hussain	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Gulbagicha</i>	Abdul Wahab Siddiqui	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Bhai-Bon</i>	Prabhatkiran Basu	1345 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Shishu Saogat</i>	Muhammad Naseeruddin	1345 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Phuljhuri</i>	Muhammad Atiqullah	1345 BS	Nadia		
<i>Abahani</i>	Ranabir Dasgupta	1346 BS	Srihatta		
<i>Alo</i>	Ramaprasad Mitra and Kumud Ranjan Das	1346 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Amar Kagoj</i>	Nripendra Krishna Chattopadhyay	1346 BS	Calcutta		

<i>Kochi Katha</i>	Nihar Ranjan Sinha	1346 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Robibar</i>	Khsitish Chandra Bhattacharya and Bishu Mukhopadhyay	1346 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Rupkatha</i>	Rabiranjana Mitra Majumdar, Samarendranath Majumdar, Ajitkumar Chattopadhyay, Krishnachandra Majumdar	1347 BS	Calcutta	inBSP 1940–1941 (v.1–v.2)	Rabiranjana was the son of Dakshinaranja Mitra Majumdar. Published by Nanigopal Raychaudhuri.
<i>Shikha</i>	Bijan Kumar Gangopadhyay	1347 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Kishor Bangla</i>	Swami Premananda	1348 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Kishor Asia</i>	Keshab Chandra Chakrabarti	1353 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Chhotoder Mahal</i>	Khagendranath Mitra	1354 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Shuktara</i>	Madhusudan Majumdar	1354 BS	Calcutta	ukBL 1936 (v.1 #1);	One of the most popular magazines for children.

**Sources:**

Basu, Bani. *Bamla Sisusahitya Granthapanji*. Kolkata, Bangiya Granthagar Parishad, 1924.

Mitra, Khagendranath. *Shatabdir Shishu Sahitya 1818–1960*. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 1999.

Mukhopadhyay, Asokhnath Mukhopadhyay. *Early Bengali Serials 1818–1950*. Kolkata, K. P. Bagchi and Company, 2004.

<http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/Kishore.php>

<https://dhulokhela.blogspot.com/2018/07/khoka-khuku-1336-jaistha.html>

[https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Shahidullah,\\_Muhammad](https://en.banglapedia.org/index.php/Shahidullah,_Muhammad)

<https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/document/UDJCT0E0R1Z6bS8rNW9PbVFjbHV3Z1BBZ1JPuk9GN3RLRjg5ZkFkndkND0>

**Appendix III: List of Periodicals with Muslim Editors (From *Digdarshan* to *Shuktara*)**

<b>Periodical</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>First Published</b>	<b>Place of Publication</b>	<b>Holding</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<i>Balak</i>	A K Fazlul Haq	1308 BS	Barishal		
<i>Angur</i>	Muhammad Shahidullah	1327 BS	Calcutta	inBSP (v.1 #1-5, 7-9, 11-12)	The first Bangla juvenile periodical to be edited by a Muslim. The editor, Muhammad Shahidullah was a well-known linguist and teacher
<i>Maktab</i>	Shakhwat Hussain	1344 BS	Calcutta/Dhaka	inBSP 1930 v.1, #1-2	An important periodical in which reputed authors (mostly Muslim) contributed poems and stories and short essays on religious conduct. The language was lucid
<i>Jomjom</i>	Mainuddin Hussain	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Gulbagicha</i>	Abdul Wahab Siddiqui	1344 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Shishu Saogat</i>	Muhammad Naseeruddin	1345 BS	Calcutta		
<i>Phuljhuri</i>	Muhammad Atiqullah	1345 BS	Nadia		

**Appendix IV: Travelogues within India Published in *Sakha*, *Sathi*, *Sakha o Sathi*, *Balak*, *Mukul*, and *Sandesh***

<b>Periodical</b>	<b>Travelogue</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year, Volume, Part, Issue</b>	<b>Page Numbers</b>
<i>Sakha</i>	Parashnath Mandir	Pramadacharan Sen	Volume 3, Issue 2, February 1885	22–24
	Elephanta Giri Mandir	Shibnath Shastri	Volume 5, Issue 5, May 1887	75–77
	Kashi	Bhuban Mohan Ray	Volume 8, Issue 3, March 1890	35–38
	Darjeeling Prabasir Patra	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Volume 9, Issue 8, August 1891	115–116
	Himalay Bhraman	Nalinibala Basu	Volume 10, Issue 3, March 1892 and Volume 10, Issue 11, November 1892	40–43 and 168–170
	Lucknow		Volume 10, Issue 8, August 1892	121–124
<i>Sathi</i>	Mahishurer Patra	Kumudini Khastagir	Year 1, Issue 6, Ashwin 1300 BS	108–110
	Assam Prabasir Patra	Amritalal Gupta	Year 1, Issue 8, Agrayayan 1300 BS and Year 1, Issue 9, Poush 1300 BS	146–148 and 164–167
	Darjeeling	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Year 1, Issue 11, Falgun 1300 BS	224–226
<i>Sakha o Sathi</i>	Mussoorie	Snehalata Sen	Part 1, Issue 11, Falgun 1301 BS	214–216
	Delhi	Jaladhar Sen	Part 1, Issue 12, Chaitra 1301 BS and Year 13, Issue 11 and 12, Falgun-Chaitra, 1303 BS	218–222 and 210–214
<i>Balak</i>	Darjeeling Jatra	Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay	Part 1, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1292 BS	9–13
	Kanchan-Shringa	Satyaprasad Gangopadhyay	Part 1, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1292 BS	75–77
	Dosh Diner Chhuti	Rabindranath Tagore	Part 1, Issue 3, Asharh, 1292 BS	113–118
	Barishaler Patra	Jyotirindranath Tagore	Part 1, Issue 2, Shraban, 1292 BS	172–178
	Baidyanath	Sharat Chandra Dutt	Part I, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1292 BS	218–221
	Prabaser Chithhi	Nagendranath Gupta	Part I, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1292 BS	230–235
	Nadiya Bhraman	Shrish Chandra Majumdar	Part 1, Issue 10, Magh, 1292 BS and Part 1, Issue 11, Falgun, 1292 BS	469–474 and 512–517
	Karachir Chithhi	Nagendranath Gupta	Part 1, Issue 10, Magh, 1292 BS	478–483

	Gaya	Prabodh Chandra Ghosh	Part 1, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1292 BS	581–585
<i>Mukul</i>	Orissa	Romesh Chunder Dutt	Part 1, Issue 2, Shrabana, 1302 BS	30–32
<i>Mukul</i>	Kashmir	Abala Basu	Part 1, Issue 6, Agrahayan 1302 BS and Part 1, Issue 7, Poush 1302 BS	94–96 and 101–104
	Elephanta Gahwar	Umesh Chandra Nag	Part 1, Issue 8, Magh 1302 BS	120–122
	Lucknow Bhraman	Abala Basu	Part 1, Issue 9, Falgun 1302 BS	136–138
	Madras Bhraman	Abala Basu	Part 1, Issue 10, Chaitra, 1302 BS	189–187
	Chittore Darshan	Abala Basu	Part 2, Issue 1, Baishakh 1303 BS	7–9
	Samudra Jatra*	Shashibhushan Basu	Part 2, Issue 12, Chaitra 1303 BS	182–185
	Palamau Bhraman	Niharika Debi	Part 7, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1308	79–80
	Desh Berano	Indubmadhab Mullick	Part 8, Issue 9, Poush, 1309 BS	130–134
	Darjeeling-er Pathe	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Part 9, Issue 2, Jaishthya 1310 BS	22–29
	Darjeeling	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Part 9, Issue 3, Ashar, 1310 BS Part 9, Issue 5–6, Bhadra & Ashwin, 1310 BS Part 9, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1310 BS Part 9, Issue 9–10, Poush & Magh, 1310 BS	37–40 69–74 119–123 143–147
<i>Mukul</i>	Andaman Dweep	Subarnaprabha Basu	Part 10, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1311 BS	25–27
	Puri O Chilka Hrad	Amritlal Gupta	Part 10, Issue 3, Asharh, 1311 BS	38–41
	Dihiri	Induprakash Bandyopadhyay	Part 10, Issue 4, Shrabana, 1311 BS	58–60
	Swadesh-e	Hemchandra Sarkar	Part 10, Issue 6, Ashwin, 1311 BS Part 10, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1311 BS Part 10, Issue 11, Falgun, 1311 BS	81–84 114–117 171–174
	Puri	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Part 11, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1312 BS Part 11, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1312 BS Part 11, Issue 3, Asharh, 1312 BS Part 11, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1312 BS	13–14 28–30 44–47 76–80

			Part 11, Issue 6, Ashwin, 1312 BS Part 11, Issue 7, Kartik, 1312 BS Part 11, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1312 BS	88–95 105–109 126–128
<i>Mukul</i>	Abar Puri-te	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Part 12, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1313 BS	178–180
	Shimultala	Indira Debi	Part 12, Issue 12, Chaitra 1313 BS	187–189
	Shimultala (2)	Priyambada Debi	Part 13, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1314 BS	14–15
	Dhakar Chithhi	Amritalal Gupta	Part 13, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1314 BS	23–26
	Abar Puri-te	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Part 13, Issue 3, Asharh, 1314 BS	37–39
	Hazaribag		Part 13, Issue 4, Shraban, 1314 BS	56–57
	Agrar Patra	Sarala Dutta	Part 13, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1314 BS	74–75
	Rajputana Bhraman	Hemendralal Kar	Part 13, Issue 6, Ashwin, 1314 BS Part 13, Issue 7, Kartik, 1314 BS Part 13, Issue 9, Poush, 1314 BS	94–96 111–112 143–144
	Prabaser Sanchay	Priyambada Debi	Part 14, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1315 BS	4–8
<i>Mukul</i>	Rangamati Bhraman	Jibendra Kumar Dutta	Part 14, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1315 BS Part 14, Issue 6, Ashwin, 1315 BS	77–80 94–96
	Kashmir Bhraman	Swarnaprabha Basu	Part 14, Issue 9, Poush, 1315 BS Part 14, Issue 10, Magh, 1315 BS	142–144 153–154
	Kashmir Kahini	Swarnaprabha Basu	Part 14, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1315 BS	191–192
	Himalaye Ekdin	Kartik Chandra Dasgupta	Part 15, Issue 3, Asharh, 1316 BS Part 15, Issue 4, Shraban, 1316 BS	44–47 56–59
	Brahmaputra Snan	Kartik Chandra Dasgupta	Part 15, Issue 5, Bhadra 1316 BS Part 15, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1316 BS	77–80 127
	Brahmadeshe Bhraman	Surama Ray	Part 15, Issue 7, Kartik, 1316 BS	102–104
	Shaharer Bahire	Indumadhab Mallik	Part 15, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1316 BS	182–183

	Coxbazar	Narendra Bhushan Dutta	Part 15, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1316 BS	184
	Brahmadeshe Bhraman	Surama Ray	Part 16, Issue 5, Bhadra, 1317 BS	69–73
<i>Mukul</i>	Jabbalpur	Bijayratna Majumdar	Part 17, Issue 11, Falgun 1318 BS Part 17, Issue 12, Chaitra, 1318 BS	169–171 183–186
	Haridwar	Bijayratna Majumdar	Year 18, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1319 BS	125–127
	Pujar Chhuti	Priyambada Debi	Year 18, Issue 10, Magh, 1319 BS Year 18, Issue 11, Falgun, 1319 BS	153–156 166–168
	Burma Jatrir Patra	Shri Hiralal	Year 19, Issue 1, Baishakh, 1320 BS Year 19, Issue 2, Jaishthya, 1320 BS Year 19, Issue 3, Asharh, 1320 BS Year 19, Issue 4, Shraban, 1320 BS	13–15 25–30 42–46 61–63
	Hrishikesh		Year 19, Issue 7, Kartik, 1320 BS	104–105
	Pushkar	Sourendranath Basu	Year 19, Issue 8, Agrahayan, 1320 BS	121–122
	Samudrik Durghatana**	Hemchandra Sarkar		
<i>Sandesh</i>	Megher Muluk	Upendrakishore Raychaudhuri	Year 2, Issue 3, Asharh 1321 BS, Year 2, Issue 4, Shraban, 1321 BS Year 2, Issue 5, Bhadra 1321	70–74 106–109 143–145

## Sources:

### *Libraries*

National Library of India, Kolkata

Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, Kolkata

Sadharan Brahmo Samaj Library, Kolkata

### *Online Sources*

British Library Endangered Archives Programme (<https://eap.bl.uk/search?query=Mukul>)

Indian Culture Repository (<https://indianculture.gov.in/indian-culture-repository>)

South Asia Archives (<https://southasiacommons.net/orgs/mukul-office/>)

### *Texts*

Chattopadhyay, Aruna editor. *Sakha, Sakha o Sathi*. Kolkata, Kallol, February 2002.

Mitra, Ashoke Kumar and Subimal Misra editors. *Sakha o Sathi*. Reprint. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2015.

Pal, Amal. *Kisorepathya Patrikapancak*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2007.

Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore editor. *Sandesh* Year 1. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 1415 BS.

Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore editor. *Sandesh* Year 2. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 2018.

\* Not found

\*\* Not found

## **Bibliography**

### ***List of Bangla Juvenile Periodicals Cited***

1. *Abodh Bandhu*
2. *Anjali*
3. *Balak*
4. *Digdarshan*
5. *Jyotiringan*
6. *Mukul*
7. *Pashwabali*
8. *Prakriti*
9. *Sakha*
10. *Sakha o Sathi*
11. *Sandesh*
12. *Sathi*
13. *Shishu*

### ***Museums and Exhibitions***

*Ghare Baire*. 11 Jan. 2019–28 Nov. 2021, Old Currency Building, Kolkata.  
<https://dagworld.com/ghare%20baire:%20the%20world,%20the%20home%20and%20beyond-%20collab.html>

*March to Freedom*. 23 Jul.–18 Sep. 2022, Indian Museum, Kolkata.  
<https://dagworld.com/march-to-freedom-reflections-on-india-s-independence.html>

Victoria Memorial, Kolkata.

### **Online Collections**

*The Tagores*. Delhi Art Gallery. <https://dagworld.com/the-tagores.html>

*Vision and Landscape: Aquatints of India* by Thomas Daniell and William Daniell. Delhi Art Gallery. <https://dagworld.com/a-vision-of-india.html>

*New Found Lands: The Indian Landscape from Empire to Freedom*. Delhi Art Gallery. <https://dagworld.com/new-found-lands-the-indian-landscape-from-empire-to-freedom.html>

*Indian Landscapes: The Changing Horizons*. Delhi Art Gallery. <https://dagworld.com/indian-landscapes-the-changing-horizon.html>

*Parikraman*. Rabindranath Tagore. National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi. <http://www.ngmaindia.gov.in/virtual-tour-of-rabindranath-tagore.asp>

*Parikraman*. Gaganendranath Tagore. National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi. <http://www.ngmaindia.gov.in/virtual-tour-of-gaganendranath-tagore.asp>

*Parikraman*. Abanindranath Tagore. National Gallery of Modern Art, Delhi. <http://www.ngmaindia.gov.in/virtual-tour-of-abanindranath-tagore.asp>

Royal Academy of Arts, London. <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/search/search-the-collection>

Tate Britain, London. <https://www.tate.org.uk/about-us/collection>

Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <https://www.vam.ac.uk/collections?type=featured>

Victoria Memorial, Kolkata.

### **Published/Printed Works**

“Bhaktipather Dhulay Dhulay.” Editor’s Note to “Chaitanyer Bhraman” by Satyabati Giri. *Sampan*, Special Issue on Travel Writing, year 12, vol. 7, no. 1 & 2, January 2022, pp. 129–43.

“Indian Railway Items.” *The Railway Times*, 26 July 1890, p. 112.

“Nanabidho Jaan.” *Jyotirangan*, vol. II, June 1870, p. 137.

“The Quarter.” *The Calcutta Review*, 1895, pp. 211–12.

*A Handbook for Travellers in India, Burma and Ceylon*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., London, John Murray/ Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1901.

Achebe, Chinua. “The Art of Fiction.” *The Paris Review*, issue 133, winter 1994. <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1720/the-art-of-fiction-no-139-chinua-achebe>. Interview.

Adhikari, Dharmadas. *Prabandhabali*. Bhabanipur, Kolkata, 1874.

Aguiar, Marian. *Tracking Modernity: India’s Railway and Culture of Mobility*. University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Andrews, Malcolm. *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain*. Stanford University Press, 1989.

Anisujaman. “Muslim Banglar Samayikpatra: 1831–1930.” *Mudraner Sanskriti o Bangla Boi*, edited by Swapan Chakravorty, Kolkata, Ababhas, 2007, pp. 164–81.

---. *Muslim Banglar Samayikpatra 1831–1930*. Dhaka, Bangla Akademi, 1969.

Anonymous. “Shishu Binayan.” *Abodhbandhu*, Jaishthya–Asharh 1274, BS 1867. *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 624–28.

Anonymous. “Shishu Binayan.” *Bamabodhini Patrika*, Magh 1302, BS 1895. *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 671–74.

Anonymous. “Stree Jatir Bishesh Karjya.” *Bamabodhini Patrika*, Asharh 1275, BS 1868, Falgun 1276 BS [1869], Asharh 1277 BS. *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 634–39.

Anonymous. “Stree o Swamir Kathopakathan.” *Bamabodhini Patrika*, Kartik–Falgun 1273, BS 1868–69. *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 628–31.

Aqil, Raziuddin, and Tilottama Mukherjee, editors. *An Earthly Paradise: Trade, Politics and Culture in Early Modern Bengal*. Routledge, 2020.

Archer, Mildred, and Graham Parlett. *Company Paintings: Indian Paintings of the British Period*. USA, Grantha Corporation/London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1992.

Archer, Mildred, and Ronald Lightbown. *India Observed: India as Viewed by British Artists, 1760–1860*. Victoria and Albert Museum, 1982.

Aries, Phillippe. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Translated by Robert Baldick, A. Knopf, 1962.

Arnold, David. “Deathscapes: India in an Age of Romanticism and Empire, 1800–1856.” *Nineteenth Century Contexts*, vol. 26, no. 4, December 2004, pp. 339–53.

---. “Technologies of the Steam Age.” *The New Cambridge History of India III.5: Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India*, edited by David Arnold, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 92–128.

Auerbach, Jeffrey. “The Picturesque and the Homogenization of the Empire.” *The British Art Journal* 5, no. 1, spring/summer 2004, pp. 47–54.

Bagchi, Ishwar Chandra Sharma. *Tirtha Mukur*. Kolkata, 1899.

Bagchi, Jasodhara, et al. *Loved and Unloved: The Girl Child in the Family*. Kolkata, Stree, 1997.

Bagchi, Jasodhara. “Socialising the Girl Child in Colonial Bengal.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 28, no. 41, October 1993, pp. 214–19. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4400259>.

Balagopalan, Sarada. “Colonial modernity and the ‘child figure’: reconfiguring the ‘multiplicity’ in multiple ‘childhoods’.” *Childhoods in India: Traditions, Trends and Transformations*, edited by T. S. Saraswathi, Shailaja Menon, and Ankur Madan. Routledge, 2018, pp. 23–43.

Bandopadhyay, Bibhutibhushan. *Chander Pahar*. Kolkata, M. C. Sarkar, 1937.

Bandyopadhyay, Debiprasad, Ashok Kumar Mitra, and Parthajit Gangopadhyay, editors. *Shishu Kishore Sahitya Sangraha, vol. I*. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2013.

---. *Shishu Kishore Sahitya Sangraha, vol. II*. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2014.

Bandyopadhyay, Bibhutibhuashan. “Dakgari.” *Bibhuti Rachanabali, vol. V*, edited by Gajendrakumar Mitra, Chandidas Chattopadhyay, and Taradas Bandyopadhyay. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1959, pp. 397–406.

---. *Aparajito*. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1959.

- Bandyopadhyay, Chandrasekhar. *Bharatbhramankabya*. Hooghly, 1786 shakabda, [1864].
- Bandyopadhyay, Haricharan. *Bhraman Brittanto*. Hooghly, Kashinath Bhattacharya, 1876.
- Bandyopadhyay, Shekhar. *From Plassey to Partition*. New Delhi, Orient Longman, 2004.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sibaji. “On the Seashore of Endless Worlds: Rabindranath and the Child.” *The Cambridge Companion to Rabindranath Tagore*, edited by Sukanta Chaudhuri. Cambridge University Press, 2020, pp. 254–67.
- . *Bangla Shishu Sahityer Chhoto Meyera*. Kolkata, Gangchil, 2007.
- . *Gopal-Rakhal Dvandhasamas*. Kolkata, Karigar, 2013.
- Bandyopadhyay, Sumanta. “Manush Chole Koler Bole: Bangali Janachetanay Railgarir Abirbhab.” *Akademi Patrika*, issue 15, Jaishthya, 1413 BS [May 2003], pp. 106–22.
- Bandyopadhyay, Tarapada. *Darjeeling Probasir Potro*. Reprint. Edited by Abhishek Sarkar, Kolkata, Parchment, 2018.
- Banerjee, Prathama. *The Politics of Time: ‘Primitives’ and History-writing in a Colonial Society*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Banerjee, Rita, editor. *India and the Traveller: Aspects of Travelling Identity*. Bloomsbury, 2022.
- Banerjee, Sandeep, and Subho Basu. “Secularizing the Sacred, Imagining the Nation-Space: The Himalaya in Bengali travelogues, 1856–1901.” *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2015, pp. 609–49. *Cambridge Core*, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0026749X13000589>.
- . “The City as Nation: Delhi as the Indian Nation in Bengali *Bhadralok* Travelogues, 1866–1910.” *Cities in South Asia*, edited by Minoru Mio, Routledge, 2015, pp. 125–42.
- Banerjee, Sandeep. “‘Not Altogether Unpicturesque’: Samuel Bourne and the Landscaping of the Victorian Himalaya.” *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 42, 2014, pp. 351–68. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1060150314000035>.

Banerjee, Sikata. *Make Me a Man: Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India*. State University of New York, 2005.

Banerjee, Swapna M. "Everyday Emotional Practices of Fathers and Children in Late Colonial Bengal, India." *Childhood, Youth and Emotions in Modern History: National, Colonial and Global Perspectives*, edited by Stephanie Olsen, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 221–41.

---. *Men, Women, and Domesticity: Articulating Middle-Class Identity in Colonial Bengal*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

---. "Children's Literature in Nineteenth Century India: Some Reflections and Thoughts." *Stories for Children, Histories of Childhood, vol. II: Literature*, edited by Rosie Findlay and Sebastien Salbayre. New edition [online], Tours, Presses universitaires François-Rabelais, 2007, pp. 337–51.

Banerjee-Dube, Ishita. "Myths, metaphors, meanings: Kalapahar in Bengal and Orissa." *On Modern Indian Sensibilities: Culture, Politics, History*, edited by Ishita Banerjee-Dube and Sarvani Gooptu, Routledge, 2018, pp. 60–77.

*Banglar Bhugol o Itihasa*. Translated from *An Easy Introduction to the History and Geography of Bengal* by Ebenezer Lethbridge. Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1875.

*Banglar Bhugol o Itihasa*. 1875, Calcutta, n. p.

Barma, Harachandra. "Railgari." *Shishu*, year 2, issue 7, Kartik, 1320 BS, pp. 313–19.

Basak, Nilmani. *Bharatbarsher Itihasa Part II*. Calcutta, 1857.

---. *Bharatbarsher Itihasa Part III*. Calcutta, 1858.

Basnett, Susan. "Travel Writing and Gender." *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, edited by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 225–41.

Basu, Abala. "Agnayagiri Darshan." *Mukul*, part IV, issue 3, Asharh, 1305 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, p. 33.

---. "Chittore Darshan." *Mukul*, part II, issue 1, Baishakh, 1303 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 284–86.

---. "Kashmir." *Mukul*, part I, issue 6 & 7, Agrahayan and Poush, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 10–13.

---. "London er Golpo." *Mukul*, part III, issue 11, Falgun, 1304 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 188–90.

---. "Lucknow." *Mukul*, part I, issue 9, Poush–Falgun, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 257–59.

---. "Lupto Nagari." *Mukul*, part IV, issue 4, Shraban, 1305 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 218–20.

---. "Madras Bhraman." *Mukul*, part I, issue 10, Chaitra, 1302 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 74–76.

---. "Parliament Darshan." *Mukul*, part III, issue 10, Magh, 1304 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 247–49.

---. "Venice." *Mukul*, part V, issue 2, Jaishthya, 1306 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 158–60.

---. "Westminster Abbey." *Mukul*, part III, issue 12, Chaitra, 1304 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 238–39.

Basu, Bani. *Bamla Sisusahitya: Granthapanji*. Kolkata, Bijaynath Mukhopadhyay, Bangiya Granthagar Parishad, 1924.

Basu, Buddhadeb. "Shishu Sahitya." *Prabandha Sankalan*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 1363 BS, pp. 159–90.

Basu, Buddhadeb. *Amar Chhelebel*. Kolkata, M. C. Sarkar, 1960.

Basu, Nagendranath. Introduction. *Tirthamangalkabya*, edited by Nagendranath Basu, reprint. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2009.

Basu, Nalinibala. "Himalay Bhraman." *Sakha*, part 10, March 1892, pp. 40–43 and November 1892, pp. 168–70.

Basu, Pradip, editor. *Samayiki: Purono Samayik Patrer Prabandha Sankalan, vol. II: Griho O Poribar*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009.

Basu, Rajshekhar. "Kochi Sangsad." *Kajjali*. 12<sup>th</sup> ed., Kolkata, M. C. Sarkar and Sons, 1392 BS.

Basu, Subho. "The Dialectics of Resistance: Colonial Geography, Bengali Literati and the Racial Mapping of Indian Identity." *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 44, no.1, January 2010, pp. 53–79. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27764646>.

Bennike, Rune. "A Summer Place: Darjeeling in the Tourist Gaze." *Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, Environments*, edited by Townsend Middleton and Sara Shneiderman. Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. 54–73.

---. *A Comprehensive History of Modern Bengal 1700–1950, vol. III*. Delhi, Primus Books, 2020.

Bhattacharya, Asutosh, editor. *Baish Kobir Manasamangal ba Baisha*. Calcutta, University of Calcutta, 1954.

---. *Bangla Mangalkabyer Itihas*. Kolkata, Kolikata Book House, 1346 BS.

Bhattacharya, Nandini. "Leisure, economy and colonial urbanism: Darjeeling, 1835–1930." *Urban History*, vol. 40, issue 3, August 2013, pp. 442–61.

Bhattacharya, Parimal. *Dyanchinama*. Kolkata, Ababhash, 2019.

Bhattacharya, Ramkamal. *Bacon Sandarbha*. Kolkata, 1861.

Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi, editor. *A Comprehensive History of Modern Bengal 1700–1950, vol. II*. Delhi, Primus Books, 2020.

Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi. *Vande Mataram: The Biography of a Song*. Penguin, 2003.

Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi. *Talking Back: The Idea of Civilization in the Indian Nationalist Discourse*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Bhattacharya, Tithi. *The Sentinels of Culture: Class, Education, and the Colonial Intellectual in Bengal (1848–85)*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Bhowmik, Shekhar. Introduction. *Tirtha Bhraman*, edited by Nagendranath Basu. Reprint. Kolkata, Ashadeep, 2014, pp. 5–22.

Bishi, Pramathanath. *Rabindranath o Santiniketan*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1407 BS.

Biswas, Stella Chitrlekha. "Space, Nation and Colonial Childhood: A Critical Study of Bengali Juvenile Periodicals." *Barnelitterært forskningstidsskrift*, vol. 13, issue 1, 2022, pp. 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.18261/blft.13.1.12>

---. "The Travels and Travails of a Bengali: Reading Sanjib Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Palamau*. *Café Dissensus*. 2020, <https://cafedissensus.com/2020/10/23/the-travels-and-travails-of-a-bengali-reading-sanjib-chandra-chattopadhyays-palamau/>

Biswas, Usha. "Bangla Shishu Sahitya Sambandhe Koyekti Katha." *Prabasi*, Shraban 1354 BS. Reprint in *Prabasi te Naari 1901–1947*, edited by Bharati Ray. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2016, pp. 704–13.

*Bitarkika*. Issue on Bengalis and Travel, year 2, issue 2, February 2000.

Blochmann, H. *Contributions to the Geography and History of Bengal (Muhammedan Period)*. Reprint. Calcutta, Asiatic Society, 1968.

Blunt, Alison. "The Flight from Lucknow: British Women Travelling and Writing Home, 1857–8." *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing*, edited by James Duncan and Derek Gregory. Routledge, 2002.

Borthwick, Meredith. *The Changing Role of Women in Bengal 1844–1905*. Princeton University Press, 1984.

Bose, Pradip Kumar. "Sons of the Nation: Child Rearing in the New Family." *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal*, edited by Partha Chatterjee. University of Minneapolis Press, 1995, pp. 118–44.

Bowles, W. B. *Sonnets*. London, 1779.

Bratton, J. S. *The Impact of Victorian Children's Fiction*. London: Croom Helm, 1981.

Bridges, Roy. "Exploration and Travel Outside Europe, 1720–1914." *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, edited by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 53–69.

Bristow, Joseph. *Empire Boys: Adventure's in a Man's World*. Routledge, 2016.

Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Inquiry into Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. London, Thomas. M. Lean, 1823.

Burton, Antoinette. *At the Heart of the Empire: Indians and the Colonial Encounter in Late-Victorian Britain*. University of California Press, 1998.

Caine, W. S. *Picturesque India: A Handbook for European Travellers*. London, Manchester, and New York, George Routledge and Sons, 1891.

Carpenter, Kevin. *Penny Dreadfuls and Comics: English Periodicals for Children from Victorian Times to the Present Day*. Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, 1983. Exhibition Catalogue.

- Carr, Helen. "Modernism and Travel, 180–1940." *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, edited by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 70–86.
- Carroll, Jane Suzanne. *Landscape in Children's Literature*. Routledge, 2012.
- Chakrabarti, Arindam. *Railgari: Bashpiya Rath theke Metro*. Kolkata, Pratikhshan, 2018.
- Chakrabarti, Biharilal. "Samudra Sandarshan." *Abodh Bandhu*, vol. II, issue 7, Kartik, 1275 BS 1868, pp. 106–108.
- Chakrabarti, Dilip K. *India: An Archaeological History, Paleolithic Beginnings to Early Historical Foundations*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Chakrabarti, Khsitish Chandra. Letter to the Editor. *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. 4, Falgun, 1304 BS, p. 220.
- Chakrabarti, Kunal, and Shubhra Chakrabarti, editors. *Historical Dictionary of the Bengalis*. Scarecrow Press, 2013.
- Chakrabarti, Narahari. *Braja Parikrama*, edited by Nagendranath Basu. Kolkata, Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, 1312 BS.
- . *Nabadwip Parikrama, part I*, edited by Nagendranath Basu. Kolkata, Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, 1316 BS.
- Chakrabarti, Punyalata. *Chhelebelar Dinguli*. Kolkata, New Script, 1958. 1880 Shakabda.
- Chakrabarti, Uma. "Did girls have a childhood in the past? Mythologies, ideologies, histories." *Childhoods in India: Traditions, Trends and Transformations*, edited by T. S. Saraswathi, Shailaja Menon, and Ankur Madan. Routledge, 2018, pp. 44–62.
- Chakraborty, Basundhara. "A Travelling Wife's Tale: A Gendered Reading of Travelogues by Lady Abala Bose." *In Passage: The International Journal of Writing and Mobility*, vol. 3, 2020, pp. 53–68.
- Chakravarti, Ranabir. *Trade and Traders in Early Indian Society*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Routledge, 2021.
- Chatterjee, Arup. K. *Purveyors of Destiny: A Cultural Biography of the Indian Railways*. Bloomsbury, 2017.
- Chatterjee, Baijayanti. "Transport, Mobility and Mobile Groups in Bengal: Deconstructing Colonial Myths of Movement and Migration in the Eighteenth

Century.” *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, vol. 12, no.1, January–March, 2020, pp. 1–13.

Chatterjee, Chandrani. *Translation Reconsidered: Culture, Genre, and the “Colonial Encounter” in Nineteenth Century Bengal*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010.

Chatterjee, Kumkum. “Discovering India: Travel, History and Identity in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-century India.” *Invoking the Past: The Uses of History in South Asia*, edited by Daud Ali. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Chatterjee, Partha. “Claims on the Past: The Genealogy of Modern Historiography in Bengal.” *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*, edited by David Arnold and David Hardiman. Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 1–49.

Chatterjee, Partha. “Our Modernity”. Rotterdam, SEPHIS-CODESRIA, 1997.  
<http://ccs.ukzn.ac.za/files/partha1.pdf>

Chatterjee, Partha. Foreword. *The Observant Owl: Hootum’s Vignettes of Nineteenth-Century Calcutta*. Translated by Swarup Roy, Ranikhet, Black Kite, 2008, pp. ix–xii.

---. *Itihaser Uttaradhikar*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2000.

---. *The Nation and Its Fragments*. Oxford University Press, 1993.

Chatterjee, Rimi. B., and Nilanjana Gupta, editors. *Reading Children: Essays on Children’s Literature*. Orient Blackswan, 2009, pp. 92–111.

Chattopadhyay, Aruna, editor. *Sakha, Sakha o Sathi*. Kolkata, Kallol, February 2002.

Chattopadhyay, B. D. *The Concept of Bharatvarsha and Other Essays*. State University of New York Press, 2018.

Chattopadhyay, Bankim Chandra. “Banga Desher Krishak.” *Bankim Rachanabali*, vol. II, edited by Jogesh Chandra Bagal. Kolkata, Sahitya Sansad, 1392 BS, pp. 287–314.

---. “Bangalar Itihas Sambandhe Koyekti Katha.” *Bankim Rachanabali*, vol. II, edited by Jogesh Chandra Bagal. Kolkata, Sahitya Sansad, 1985, pp. 336–40.

---. “Bangalar Itihas.” *Bankim Rachanabali*, vol. II, edited by Jogesh Chandra Bagal. Kolkata, Sahitya Sansad, 1985, pp. 330–33.

---. *Kapalkundala*. Translated by H. A. D. Phillips. London, Trubner, and Co., 1885.

Chattopadhyay, Birendra. “Amar Santan Jak Protyoho Noroke.” *Nirbacita Kabita*. Kolkata, Dey’s Publishing, 2000, pp. 45–6.

Chattopadhyay, Ramananda. "Oitihāsik Tirthayatra." *Dasi*, vol. 2, issue 1, 1893, pp. 21–7.

---. "Rabindranath O Masik Patra." Reprint. *Rabindranath*, edited by Arnab Nag. Kolkata, Sutradhar, 2015, pp. 27–32.

Chattopadhyay, Sanjib Chandra. *Palamou*, edited by Brajendranath Bandyopadhyay and Sajanikanta Das. Kolkata, Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, 1358 BS.

---. *Palamou*. Translated by Arnab Bhattacharya. Createspace Independent Publishing, 2014.

Chattopadhyay, Tarinicharan. *Bhugol Bibaran, part II*. Calcutta, n.p., 1857.

---. *Bharatbarsher Itihas*. Calcutta, Sanskrit Press Depository, 1888.

Chaudhuri, Pramatha [Birbal]. "Shishu Sahitya." *Sabuj Patra*, year 3, issue 8, Agrahayan, 1323 BS, pp. 446–51.

Chaudhuri, Rosinka. Introduction. *Letters from a Young Poet 1887–1895*. Rabindranath Tagore. Translated by Rosinka Chaudhuri. Penguin, 2014, pp. 1–39.

Chaudhuri, Sukanta. "Ramkamal's Translation of Francis Bacon's *Essays*." <https://www.bl.uk/early-indian-printed-books/articles/ramkamals-translation-of-francis-bacons-essays>

Chaudhuri, Supriya. "Indian Travel Writing." *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, edited by Nandini Das and Tim Youngs. Cambridge University Press, 2019, pp. 159–74.

---. "Exhibiting India: Colonial subjects, imperial objects, and the lives of commodities." *Commodities and Culture in the Colonial World*, edited by Supriya Chaudhuri et al. Routledge, 2018, pp. 56–71.

---. "Seeing Things: Tagore's Sense of the Real." *Tagore, Einstein and the Nature of Reality: Literary and Philosophical Reflections*, edited by Partha Ghose. Routledge, 2019, pp. 73–91.

Chaudhury, Sushil. *Companies, Commerce and Merchants: Bengal in the Pre-Colonial Era*. Routledge, 2017.

Chowdhury, Indira. *The Frail Hero and Virile History*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Chunder, Bholanauth. *Travels of a Hindoo to Various Parts of Bengal and Upper India, vol I*. London, Troubner and Co., 1869.

- Codell, Julie F. "Reversing the Grand Tour: Guest Discourse in Indian Travel Narratives." *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 1, March 2007, pp. 173–89. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/hlq.2007.70.1.173>
- Cohn, Bernard S. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*. Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Constantine, Mary-Ann. "John Hassells, Wales and the 'industrial picturesque'". <https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/john-hassell-wales-and-the-industrial-picturesque>.
- Cosgrove, Denis. *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.
- Crane, Ralph, and Anna Johnston. "Flora Annie Steel in the Punjab." *Writing, Travel and Empire: In the Margins of Anthropology*, edited by Peter Hulme and Russel McDougall. L. B. Tauris and Co., 2007, pp. 71–96.
- Cunningham, Alexander. *The Ancient Geography of India, vol I*. London: Trubner and Co., 1871.
- Curley, David L. "Styles of Mastery of a Calcutta Brahman Family: Krishnachandra Ghoshal's Pilgrimage to Gaya, Kashi and Prayag, 1769, in Vijayram Sen's *Tirthamangala*." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. 57, no. 1, 2020, pp. 77–123.
- . "The 'World of the Text' and Political Thought in Bengali Mangal-kavya, c. 1500–1750." *The Medieval History Journal*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2011, pp. 183–211.
- . *Poetry and History: Bengali Mangal-kabya and Social Change in Precolonial Bengal*. A Collection of Open Access Books and Monographs 5. 2018.
- Daniell, Thomas, and William Daniell. *Early views of India: The Picturesque Journeys of Thomas and William Daniell, 1786-1794: The complete aquatints*, edited by Mildred Archer. London, Thames and Hudson, 1980.
- Das, Asitabha, editor. *Sab Sera Mukul*. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018.
- , editor. *Sab Sera Mukul*. Preface by Gautam Niyogi. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018.
- . Introduction. *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, n.p.

Das, Krishnabhabini. *A Bengali Lady in England*. Translated by Somdatta Mandal. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015.

Dasgupta, Ashin. *Bharat Mahasagare Banijya o Rajneeti 1500–1800*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 1999.

Dasgupta, Damayanti, editor. *Abala Basur Bhraman Katha*. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2015.

Dasgupta, Prasenjit, and Soumyen Pal, editors. *Darjeeling*. Kolkata, Charchapad, 2013.

Dasgupta, Sreemoyee. “Nationalism, Genre and Childhood in Colonial Indian Children’s Literature.” 2021. University of Pittsburgh, PhD dissertation.

De Lange, Attie, et al., editors. *Literary Landscapes: From Modernism to Postcolonialism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Dean Mahomet. *The Travels of Dean Mahomet*. Cork, 1794.

Deb, Chitra. “Bangla Shishu Sahitya.” *Bangla Mudran o Prakashan*, edited by Chittaranjan Bandyopadhyay. Kolkata, Basumati Sahitya Mandir, 1981, pp. 252–68.

---. *Antahpurer Atmakatha*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 1984.

Dey, Provas Ronjan. *Children’s Literature of Bengal*. Calcutta, Academy for Documentation and Research on Children’s Literature, 1978.

*Digdarshan*. Compilation and Introduction by Nimai Pal. Kolkata, Haramoni, 2014.

Dixon, Diana. “From Instruction to Amusement: Attitudes of Authority in Children’s Periodicals before 1914.” *Victorian Periodicals Review*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1986, pp. 63–67. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20082203>.

Drotner, Kirsten. *English Children and Their Magazines, 1751–1945*. Yale University Press, 1988.

Dutt, Romesh Chunder. “Orissa.” *Mukul* part I, issue 2, Sharaban, BS1302. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 365–66.

---. *The Peasantry of Bengal*. Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1874.

Dutt, Shoshee Chunder. *Shunkur: A Tale of the Indian Mutiny of 1857*. Reprint. Edited by Subhendu Mund. New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 2017, pp. 515–95.

Dutta, Akshay Kumar. *Bhugol*. Calcutta, n.p., 1763.

---. "Directions For a Railway Traveller/ Bashpiya Ratharohidiger Proti Upodesh." Kolkata, 1776 Shakabda.

---. *Sea Voyage and Commerce of Ancient Hindus/Prachin Hindudiger Samudrajatra o Banijyabistar*, edited by Rajani Nath Dutta. Kolkata, Sanskrit Press Depository, 1901.

Dutta, Bhabataran, editor. *Banglar Chhada: A Collection of Bengali Folk Rhymes*. Kolkata, Paschimanga Bangla Akademi, 2009.

Dutta, Kamal Kumar. "Ishwar Chandra Gupter Bhramankatha". *Sampan*, Special Issue on Travel Writing, year 12, vol. 7, no. 1 & 2, January 2022, pp. 333–43.

---. Introduction. *Bhramonkari Bondhur Patra*. Compiled and edited by Kamal Kumar Dutta and Santu Das. Mankundu, Hooghly, Akshorik, 2018.

Dutta, Nagendra Chandra. "Anguler Pathe." *Nabanur*, year 1, Jaishthya, 1310 BS, PP. 49–56.

Dutta, Sharat Chandra. "Baidyanath." *Balak*, year 1, part 1, issue 5, Bhadra, 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing. 1885, pp. 215–217.

Dutta, Subhadipa. "The Genre, Games, and Gender: The Textual Representation of Childhood Play in the *Maṅgalakāvya*s of Pre-colonial Bengal." *Folklore*, vol. 132, no. 2, 2021, pp. 165–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0015587X.2021.1889855>.

Dutta, Sutapa, editor. *British Women Travellers: Empire and Beyond, 170–1870*. Routledge, 2020.

---. "Colonial Textbooks and National Consciousness in British India." *History of Education*, vol. 51, no. 6, 2022, pp. 827–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2022.2050304>.

---. "Imperial Guidebooks for Charting India." *Mapping India: Transitions and Transformations, 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Century*, edited by Sutapa Dutta and Nilanjana Mukherjee. Routledge, 2020, pp. 17–36.

---. "The Memsahib's Gaze: Representation of the Zenana in India." *British Women Travellers: Empire and Beyond, 170–1870*, edited by Sutapa Dutta. Routledge, 2020, pp. 120–36.

---. *Disciplined Subject: Schooling in Colonial Bengal*. Routledge, 2021.

Eck, Diana L. *India: A Sacred Geography*. Harmony Books, 2012.

Editorial. *Sathi*, year 1, issue 1, Baishakh, 1300 BS, p. 20.

Edney, Matthew H. *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*. University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Fergusson, James. *Archaeology in India with Especial Reference to the Works of Babu Rajendralala Mitra*. London, Trubner and Co., 1884.

---. *Picturesque Illustration of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan*. London, Hogarth, 1848.

Fisher, Michael H., editor. *The Travels of Dean Mahomet*. University of California Press, 1997.

---. “Early Indian Travel Guides to Britain.” *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces*, edited by Tim Youngs. London, Anthem, 2006, pp. 87–106.

---. “From India to England and Back: Early Indian Travel Narratives for Indian Readers.” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 1, March 2007, pp. 153–72. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/hlq.2007.70.1.153>.

Flora, Giuseppe. “On Fairy Tales, Intellectuals and Nationalism in Bengal (1880-1920).” *Rivista degli studi orientali*, Vol. 75, Supplemento No. 1, 2002, pp. 1–3, 5, 7–92. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41913063>.

Forbes, Geraldine. *Women in Modern India*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Fosbroke, T. D. *The Tourist's Grammar*. London, John Nichols and Son, 1826.

Franklin, Michael J., editor. *Romantic Representations of British India*. Routledge, 2005.

Froebel, Friedrich. *Education of Man*. Reprint. D. Appleton and Company, 1907.

*From the Hooghly to the Himalayas*. Eastern Bengal State Railways. Bombay, 1913.

Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*. Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1938.

Gangopadhyay, Asha. *Bangla Shishu Sahityer Kramabikash 1800–1900*. Calcutta, D. M. Library, 1336 BS.

Gangopadhyay, Gargi. “Our Motherland: Mapping an Identity in Bengali Children’s Literature.” *The Nation in Children’s Literature: Nations of Childhood*, edited by Christopher (Kit) Kelen and Björn Sundmark. Routledge, 2013, pp. 139–60.

---. "Children's Books from Bengal: A Documentation".

<http://bengalichildrensbooks.in/>

---. "Reading Leisure: A Print Culture for Children in Colonial Bengal". 2012.

Jadavpur University, PhD dissertation.

---. 2018. "Imperialism and Nationhood in Children's Books in Colonial Bengal."

*Journal of Education, Media, Memory, and Society*, vol. 10, no. 1, spring 2018, pp. 63–81. <http://doi.org/10.3167/jemms.2018.100105>.

Gangopadhyay, Mohanlal. *Charanik*. Translated by Jayanta Sengupta. New Delhi, Rupa Publications, 2021.

Gangopadhyay, Parthajit, editor. *Balak*. Kolkata, Parul, 2018.

Gangopadhyay, Satyaprasad. "Darjeeling Jatra." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 1, Baishakh 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 1885, pp. 7–12.

---. "Kanchan Shringa." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 1, Baishakh 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 1885, pp. 67–71.

Ghose, Durgabati. *The Westward Traveller*. Translated by Somdatta Mandal. New Delhi, Orient BlackSwan, 2010.

Ghose, Indira. "Imperial Player: Richard Burton in Sindh." *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces*, edited by Tim Youngs. London, Anthem, 2006, pp. 71–86.

---. *Memsahibs Abroad: Writings by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

---. *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Ghose, Parna. "'Her' Story in the 'History of Nationalism: Re-Reading Women's Travel Narratives.'" *Caesurae: Poetics of Cultural Translation*, vol. 2, issue 1, Special Issue, January, 2017, pp. 20–34.

Ghosh, Baridbaran. Preface. *Tirthamangalkabya*, edited by Nagendranath Basu, reprint. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2009.

Ghosh Chaudhuri, Radhika Prasad. "Santan Palan Sambandhe Koyekti Upodesh". *Bamabodhini Patrika*, Jaishthya 1311 BS, 1904. *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 703–04.

Ghosh, Durgabati. *Paschimjatriki*. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2007.

- Ghosh, Prabodh Chandra, "Gaya." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 12, Chaitra 1292 BS, 1885. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, pp. 521–23.
- Ghosh, Semanti. *Different Nationalisms: Bengal 1905–1947*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Ghosh, Siddhartha. "Chhobi Chhapar Kol-Koushal o Upendrakishore". *Siddhartha Ghosh Probondho Songraha*, edited by Kaushik Majumdar, Debajyoti Guha, and Soumen Pal. Kolkata, Book Farm, 2017, pp. 17–27.
- . "Digdarshan theke Ramdhanu." *Siddhartha Ghosh Probondho Songraha*, edited by Kaushik Majumdar et al. Kolkata, Book Farm, 2017.
- . "Upendrakishore Ray-er Rangin Chhobi Kanchenjunga". *Siddhartha Ghosh Probondho Songraha*, edited by Kaushik Majumdar, Debajyoti Guha, and Soumen Pal. Kolkata, Book Farm, 2017, pp. 28–30.
- . *Koler Shohor Kolkata*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 1991.
- Ghosh, Tirthankar. "Women, Nation and Society: Reflections from a Late Nineteenth Century Bengali Travelogue." *Karatoa*, vol. 6, 2013, pp. 60–69.
- Gilpin, William. *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty, On Picturesque Travel and on Sketching Landscape*. London, 1792.
- Giri, Satyabati. "Chaitanyer Bhraman." *Sampan*. Special Issue on Travel Writing, year 12, vol. 7, no. 1 & 2, January 2022, pp. 121–28.
- Giribala Debi. *Raybari*, edited by Subir Raychaudhuri, co-edited by Abhijit Sen. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2003.
- Godden, Jon, and Rumer Godden. *Two Under the Indian Sun*. Reprint. Alfred Knopf, 1966.
- Goswami, Parimal. *Smritichitran*. Kolkata, Pratikhshan, 1400 BS.
- Goswami, Supriya. *Colonial India in Children's Literature*. Routledge, 2012.
- Grenby, M. O. "The Origins of Children's Literature." *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, edited by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 3–18.
- Grewal, Inderpal. *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire and the Cultures of Travel*. Duke University Press, 1996.

- Guha Thakurta, Tapati. "Recovering the Nation's Art." *Texts of Power: Emerging Disciplines in Colonial Bengal*, edited by Partha Chatterjee. University of Minneapolis Press, 1995, pp. 63–92.
- . *Monuments, Objects, Histories: Institutions of Art in Colonial and Postcolonial India*. Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Guha, Buddhadeb, and Samindra Bhowmic, editors. *Thakurbarir Bhramankahini*. Kolkata, Karigar, 2015.
- Guha, Nirojita. "Women at the Helm: *Manasa-Mangal Kavya* in Perspective." *The Sea in the Literary Imagination: Global Perspectives*, edited by Ben. P. Robertson et al. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019, pp. 95–106.
- Guha, Ranajit. *Chirasthayee Bandobaster Sutrapat*. Kolkata, Talpata, 2010.
- . *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement*. Ranikhet, Permanent Black and Orient Blackswan Private Limited, 2016.
- . *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*. Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Gupta, Abhijit. "The Culture of the Body in Colonial Bengal: The Case of Gobor Guha." *International Journal of the History of Sport*, vol. 29, no. 12, August 2012, pp. 1687–1700.
- . "Household Words: An Account of the Bengali Family Library." *The Culture of the Publisher's Series, volume II*, edited by J. Spiers. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, pp. 152–65.
- . "Raising Steam." <https://www.bl.uk/early-indian-printed-books/articles/raising-steam>
- . "The Calcutta School Book Society and the Production of Knowledge." *English Studies in Africa*, vol. 57, no. 1, 2014, pp. 55–65.
- Gupta, Amritlal. "Assam Prabasir Patra." *Sathi*, vol. 1, year 1, part I, issue 8, Agrahayan, 1300 BS (1893), pp. 146–48 and issue 9, Poush, 1300 BS, pp. 164–67.
- Gupta, Ishwar Chandra. *Bhramonkari Bondhur Patra*. Compiled and edited by Kamal Kumar Dutta and Santu Das. Mankundu, Hooghly: Akshorik, 2018.
- Gupta, Jayati. "Interstices: Travel, History, Text." *Indian Travel Narratives: New Perspectives*, edited by Somdatta Mandal. Pencraft International, 2021, pp. 19–33.

- . "London Through Alien Eyes." *Literary London: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Representation of London*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2003. Accessed June 27, 2021. <http://literarylondon.org/london-journal/march2003/gupta.html>.
- . "Modernity and the 'Global Hindoo': The Concept of the Grand Tour in Colonial India." *The Global South*, vol. 2, no. 1, spring2008, pp. 59–70.
- . *Travel Culture, Travel Writing and Bengali Women, 1870–1940*. Routledge, 2021.
- Gupta, Nagendranath. "Karachir Chithhi." *Balak*, year I, part I, issue 10, Magh, 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 1885, pp. 440–43.
- . "Prabaser Chithhi." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 5, Bhadra 1292 BS. Reprint. Kolkata: Dey's Publishing, 1885, pp. 225–28.
- Gupta, Swarupa. "1857 and Ideas about Nationhood in Bengal: Nuances and Themes." *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 42, no. 19, May2007, pp. 1762–69.
- . *Notions of Nationhood in Bengal: Perspectives on Samaj, c. 1867–1905*. Leiden, Brill, 2009.
- Halder, Gopal. *Bangla Sahityer Ruprekha, Volume 1: Ancient and Medieval*. Kolkata, Aruna, 2005.
- Harder, Hans. "Female Mobility and Bengali Women's Travelogues in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 2020. Accessed on June 26, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2020.1791500>
- Havell, E. B. *The Handbook of Indian Art*. London, John Murray, 1920.
- Heffernan, James A. W. "Wordsworth and Landscape." *The Oxford Handbook of William Wordsworth*, edited by Richard Gravil and Daniel Robinson. Online Edition. 2015. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199662128.013.0038>
- Hemingway, Andrew. *Landscape between Ideology and the Aesthetic: Marxist Essays on British Art and Art Theory, 1750–1850*. Leiden, Brill, 2016.
- Hobsbawm, E. J. *Age of Revolution 1789–1848*. Vintage, 1996.
- . *The Age of Capital 1848–1875*. London, Cardinal, 1989.
- . *The Age of Empire 1875–1914*. London, Cardinal, 1989.
- . *Bandits*. Revised Edition. Pantheon Books, 1981.
- . *Primitive Rebels*. Manchester University Press, 1971.

- Hodges, William. *Travels in India*. London, 1793.
- Hoskins, W. G. *The Making of the English Landscape*. London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1960.
- Hulme, Peter, and Russell McDougall, editors. *Writing, Travel and Empire: In the Margins of Anthropology*. London, I. B. Tauris and Co., 2007.
- . Introduction. *Writing, Travel and Empire: In the Margins of Anthropology*, edited by Peter Hulme and Russel McDougall. London, I. B. Tauris and Co., 2007, pp. 1–18.
- Hulme, Peter, and Tim Youngs, editors. *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- . Introduction. *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, edited by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 1–16.
- Hunt, Peter, editor. *Understanding Children's Literature*. Second Edition. Routledge, 2006.
- Imdad-ul-Haq. "Du Diner Himalay Bhraman." *Nabanur*, year 1, Kartik (245–252), Agrahayan (273–278), and Magh (356–366). 1310 BS.
- Immel, Andrea. "Children's Books and Constructions of Childhood." *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, edited by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 19–34.
- Indira Debi. *Amar Khata*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2009.
- Jana, Himalay. "A Highway through the Wood: Translation as a Colonial Venture in Nineteenth-Century Bengal." *Erothanatos* vol. 4, no. 1, April 2020, pp. 1–21.
- Jana, Sunil, editor. *Rabindranath Sangrihito Chhele-Bhulano Chhora*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 1992.
- Joshi, Priya. *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India*. Columbia University Press, 2002.
- Kakar, Sudhir. *Indian Childhood: Cultural Ideals and Social Reality*. R. V. Parlekar Lectures, 1979. Indian Institute of Education, Poona. Oxford University Press, 1979.
- . *Indian Childhood: Cultural Ideals and Social Reality*. Oxford University Press, 1979.
- . *The Inner World: A Psychoanalytical Study of Childhood and Society in India*. Oxford University Press, 2004.

- Karlekar, Malavika. *Memories of Belonging: Images from the Colony and Beyond*. New Delhi, Niyogi Books, 2015.
- Kastagir, Kumudini. "Mahishurer Patra." *Sathi*, issue 6, Ashwin, 1300 BS, pp. 108–10.
- Kathofer, Gabi R. "Imagining Home: Spatial Identity Constructions in Nineteenth Century German Fairy Tales." *Reading Children: Essays on Children's Literature*, edited by Rimi. B. Chatterjee and Nilanjana Gupta. New Delhi, Orient Blackswan, 2009, pp. 92–111.
- Kaviraj, Sudipta. "The Imaginary Institution of India." *Subaltern Studies Volume VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey. Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 1–39.
- Kennedy, Dane. *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj*. University of California Press, 1996.
- Kerr, Ian J., and John Hurd, editors. *India's Railway History: A Research Handbook*. Leiden, Brill, 2012.
- . *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
- . *Engines of Change: The Railroads That Made India*. Praeger, 2007.
- , editor. *Railways in Modern India*. Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Khastagir, Asis, editor. *Debendranath Thakur: Chithipatra*. Kolkata, Sopan, 2022.
- Knight, R. P. *Landscape: A Didactic Poem*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, 1795.
- Knight, Richard Payne. *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste*. London, 1805.
- LaFavre, Gabriel. "The Tea Gardens of Assam and Bengal: Company Rule and Exploitation of the Indian Population During the Nineteenth Century." *The Trinity Papers*, 2013, pp.16–31. Trinity College Digital Repository, Hartford, CT. <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/trinitypapers/21>
- Lahiri Choudhury, Deep Kanta. "'Clemency' Canning, The Telegraph, Information and Censorship During 1857." *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857*, edited by Marina Carter and Crispin Bates. Sage Publications, 2013.
- Lethbridge, Ebenezer. *An Easy Introduction to the History and Geography of Bengal*. Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1874.

- Long, James. *Catalogue of the Vernacular Literature Committee's Library*. Calcutta, 1855.
- Maitra, Kalidas. *Bhashpiya Kol o Bharatbarshiya Railway*. Serampore, 1262 BS.
- Majumdar, Harikrishna. *Bharatbarsher Itihas Part I*. Calcutta, 1882.
- Majumdar, Indubala. *Ek Aparichita Briddhar Dinlipi*. Kolkata, Ananda, 2000.
- Majumdar, Leela. "Chhotoder Jonyo Boi." *Bangla Mudran o Prakashan*, edited by Chittaranjan Bandyopadhyay. Kolkata, Basumati Sahitya Mandir, 1981, pp. 240–51.
- . "Upendra Kishor Ray Chaudhury." Translated by Syed Kausar Jamal. New Delhi, National Book Trust, 1993.
- . *Kheror Khata*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 1406 BS.
- . *Pakdondi*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2007.
- Majumdar, Rochona. *Marriage and Modernity: Family Values in Colonial Bengal*. Duke University Press, 2009.
- Majumdar, Srish Chandra. "Nadiya Bhraman." *Balak*, part I, issue 10 (Magh 1292 BS), pp. 432–36 and part I, issue 11, Falgun, 1292 BS, pp. 467–71. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's, 2010.
- Mandal, Somdatta. "Colonial Encounters: Documenting Japan Through Bengali Travellers' Eyes." *Science and Culture*, vol. 89, no. 1–2, 2023, pp. 38–44. [https://doi.org/10.36094/sc.v89.2023.Colonial\\_Encounters\\_Documenting\\_Japan.Mandal.38](https://doi.org/10.36094/sc.v89.2023.Colonial_Encounters_Documenting_Japan.Mandal.38).
- . "Mapping the Female Gaze: Women's Travel Writing from Colonial Bengal." *Indian Travel Narratives*, edited by Somdatta Mandal. Jaipur, Rawat Publications, 2010, pp. 126–54.
- , editor and translator. *Wanderlust: Travels of the Tagore Family*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 2014.
- , editor. *Indian Travel Narratives*. Jaipur, Rawat Publications, 2010.
- , editor. *Indian Travel Narratives: New Perspectives*. New Delhi, Pencraft International, 2021.
- Manoranjan Itihas*. Calcutta School Book Society. Calcutta, 1858.
- Marshman, John Clarke. *Outline of the History of Bengal*. 9<sup>th</sup> ed., Serampore, 1857.

- Mazumder, Rajashree. “‘In Search of Mammon’s Treasure Trove’: Hemendrakumar Roy’s Use of Travel in Children’s Adventure Literature.” *Studies in History*, vol. 35, issue 2, 2022, pp. 250–79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2348448919876869>
- McCutchion, David J., and Suhridd K. Bhowmik. *Patuas and Patua Art in Bengal*. Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited, 1999.
- Mills, Sara. *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women’s Travel Writing and Colonialism*. Routledge, 1991.
- I’tesamuddin, Mirza. *Shigurf Namah i Velaët, or Excellent Intelligence Concerning Europe*. Translated by James Edward Alexander. London, 1827.
- Mitchell, Edmund. *Thacker’s Guidebook to Darjeeling and Its Neighbourhood*. Calcutta, Thacker, Spink, and Co., 1891.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. “Holy Landscape: Israel, Palestine, and the American Wilderness.” *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell. University of Chicago Press, 2002, pp. 261–90.
- . 2002a. “Imperial Landscape.” *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell. University of Chicago Press, 2002, pp. 5–34.
- Mitra, Ashok. *Bharater Chittrakala Volume II*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2019.
- Mitra, Ashoke Kumar, and Subimal Misra, editors. *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. I, 1301 BS. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2015.
- Mitra, Khagendranath. *Satabdir Sishu-Sahitya 1818–1960*. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 1999.
- Mitra, Rajendralal. *Prakrito Bhugol*. Calcutta, n.p, 1776.
- . *The Antiquities of Orissa Vol. I*. Kolkata, Wyman and Co., 1875.
- Mitra, Samarpita. *Periodicals, Readers and the Making of a Modern Literary Culture: Bengal at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2020.
- Mitra, Smriti. *Boro Barir Chhoto Smriti*. Kolkata, Thema, 2008.
- Mitra, Upendranath. *Nana Saheb*. Kolkata, Purnachandra Gangopadhyay, c. 1880.
- Mitter, Partha. *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India 1850–1922*. Reprint. Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- . *Indian Art*. Oxford University Press, 2001.

- . *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reactions to Indian Art*. University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Modak, Jadab Chandra. *Stree Purushe Tirtha Jatra*. Calcutta, 1277 BS.
- Mohanty, Sachidananda, editor. *Travel Writing and the Empire*. New Delhi, Katha, 2004.
- Moitra, Kalidasa. *Geography ba Bhugol Biggnapok*. Serampore, n.p., 1263 BS.
- Moitra, Swati. "A nineteenth-century Bengali housewife and her Robinson Crusoe days: Travel and intimacy in Kailashbashini Debi's *The diary of a certain housewife*." *Feminismo/s*, vol. 36, December 2020, pp. 49–76.  
<https://doi.org/10.14198/fem.2020.36.03>.
- Mookerjea, Bhoodeb. *Manual of History (Ancient) [or] Purabrittasar Part I*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Calcutta, 1860.
- Mookerji, Radhakumud. *The Fundamental Unity of India*. Longman Greens and Co., 1914.
- Mujtaba Ali, Syed. *Deshe Bideshe [In a Land Far from Home]*. Translated by Nazes Afroz. New Delhi, Speaking Tiger Books, 2015.
- Mukherjea, Radhika Prasanna. *Introduction to Physical Geography [or] Bhubidyapath*. Calcutta, 1868.
- Mukherjee, Meenakhshi. *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Mukherjee, Nilanjana. *Spatial Imaginings in the Age of Colonial Cartographic Reason: Maps, Landscapes, Travelogues in Britain and India*. Routledge, 2021.
- Mukhopadhyay, Aparajita. "Colonized Gaze? Guidebooks and Journeying in Colonial India." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol. 37, no. 4, 2016, pp. 656–69.
- . "Wheels of Change: Impact of Railways on Colonial North Indian Society, 1855–1920." 2013. SOAS, University of London, PhD dissertation.
- . *Imperial Technology and 'Native' Agency: A Social History of Railways in Colonial India, 1850–1920*. Routledge, 2018.
- Mukhopadhyay, Asoknath. *Early Bengali Serials 1818–1950*. Kolkata, K. P. Bagchi and Company, 2004.

Mukhopadhyay, Atul Chandra. “Danton e Dui Din.” *Nabanur*. Year 1, Shraban and Bhadra, 1310 BS, pp. 126–33 and pp. 180–87.

Mukhopadhyay, Bhudeb. *Banglar Itihas Part III*. Chunchura, 1310 BS.

Mukhopadhyay, Bireshwar. *Kashi Darshan Vol II*. Calcutta, 1877.

Mukhopadhyay, Rajkrishna. *Banglar Itihas*. Calcutta, Sanskrit Press Depository, 1879.

Mukhopadhyay, Umprasad. *Manimahesh*. Translated by Sanjukta Dasgupta. New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 2006.

Mullick, Indumadhab. “Shishu Palon.” *Sakhi*. 1308 BS (1901). *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 687–90.

Munsi Azimuddin. *Ki Mojar Railer Gari*. Calcutta, 1785 Shakabda (1863). *Battalar Boi vol. I*, edited by Adris Biswas. Kolkata, Gangchil, 2011, pp. 281–93.

Murmu, Maroona, *Words of Her Own: Women Authors in Nineteenth Century Bengal*. Oxford University Press, 2020.

Murshid, Ghulam. *Kalapanir Hatchhani: Bilete Bangalir Itihas*. Dhaka, Abasar, 2008.

Nag, Umesh Chandra. *Octerlony Hoite Qutub Porjyonto*. Calcutta, 1892.

---. “Elephanta Gahwar”. *Mukul*, part I, issue 8, Magh, 1302 BS. Reprint. *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 98–99.

Nandy, Ashis. “Reconstructing Childhood: A Critique of the Ideology of Adulthood.” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 10, no. 3, winter, 1984–85, pp. 359–75.

---. *The Ambiguous Journey to the City: The Village and Other Odd Ruins of the Self in the Indian Imagination*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

---. *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Natif, Mika. “Mughal Occidentalism: Artistic Encounters between Europe and Asia at the Courts of India, 1580–1630.” *Studies in Persian Cultural History*, vol. 15. Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2018.

Nayar, Pramod K. *Indian Travel Writing in the Age of Empire, 1830–1940*. Bloomsbury, 2020.

*Newman’s Guide to Darjeeling*. Calcutta, Newman and Co., 1900.

- Nutan Panjika*. Calcutta, Day Law and Co's, 1278 BS.
- Olsen, Stephanie. *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the Making of the Modern British Citizen 1880–1914*. Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Osterhammel, Jurgen. *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*. Translated by Patrick Camiller. Princeton University Press, 2014.
- . *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*. Translated by Patrick Camiller. Princeton University Press, 2014.
- Pal, Amal. *Kisorepathya Patrikapancak*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2007.
- Pal, Asit, editor. *Adi Panjika Darpan*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2018.
- Pal, Rabin. "The Himalayan Travels of the Bengalis." *Indian Travel Narratives*, edited by Somdatta Mandal. New Delhi, Rawat Publications, 2010, pp. 155–64.
- Patmore, Coventry. *Angel in the House*. Boston, Ticknor and Fields, 1856.
- Payne, William H. *Rousseau's Emile or Treaties on Education*. D. Appleton and Company, 1905.
- Pearce, W. H. *Bhugol Brittanto*. Calcutta, Calcutta School Book Society, 1822.
- Physical Cultures of Bengal. <http://www.granthsouthasia.in/physical-cultures-of-bengal.html>
- Prasannamoyee Debi. *Aryavarta* [Excerpt]. Translated by Jayati Gupta in *Travel Cultures, Travel Writing and Bengali Women, 1870–1940*. Routledge, 2021, pp. 121–40.
- . *Aryavarta. Pather Katha: Shatabdir Shandhikshane Bangamahilar Bhraman*, edited by Abhijit Sen and Ujjal Ray. Reprint. Kolkata, Stree, 1999, pp. 52–111.
- . *Purbbakatha. Phire Dekha-1*. Kolkata, Subarnarekha, 2010.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel writing and Transculturation*. Routledge, 1992.
- Price, Uvedale. *An Essay on the Picturesque*. London, 1794.
- Printing and Book Production in Bengal*. Published by Sukanta Chaudhuri, Kolkata, School of Cultural Texts and Records, Jadavpur University, February 2009. Exhibition catalogue.

Quilley, Geoffrey. "Re-enacting Art and Travel: Art & Environment." *Tate Papers* 17, spring 2012. <https://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/17/re-enacting-art-and-travel>. Accessed on 25 May 2019.

---. "Introduction: mapping the art of travel and exploration." *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol. 43, 2014, pp. 2–8.

Rahman, Motiur. "Prabaser Smriti." *Nabanur* Part I, Baishakh (23–26), Jaishthya (61), Asharh (105–106), Shraban (164–170), Ashwin (262–268), 1311 BS.

Ramananda Bharati. *Himaranya*. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 2021.

Ramnarayan Bidyaratna. *Bhugolbidyasar*. Calcutta, 1858.

Ray Sengupta, Girijabhushan. "Shishupalan." *Janmabhumi*, Asharh, 1317 BS (1910). *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 713–18.

Ray, Avishek. "The Aesthetic Gaze: Siting Nineteenth Century Indian Travel Writing." *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, vol. 8, no. 4, 2016, pp. 122–29. <https://dx.doi.org/10.21659/rupkatha.v8n4.14>.

Ray, Bharatchandra. *Annadamangal*. Kolkata, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 1775 Shakabda [1853].

Ray, Bharati, editor. *Prabasi te Naari 1901–1947*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2016.

---. *Nari o Poribar: Bamabodhini Patrika (1270–1329 BS)*. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2012.

Ray, Bharati. *Early Feminists of Colonial India: Sarala Devi Chaudhurani and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Ray, Bhuban Mohan. "Pather Chhobi." *Sakha*. Part 6, issue 5, May 1888, pp. 79–80.

---. Editorial. *Sakha o Sathi*, Year 1, issue 1. Reprint. *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. I, 1301 BS. Edited by Ashoke Kumar Mitra and Subimal Misra. Kolkata, Shishu Kishore Akademi, 2015.

Ray, Satyajit. "Upendrakishore." *Prabandha Sangraha*, edited by Sandip Ray. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2015, pp. 407–09.

Ray, Sukhendu, and Malavika Karlekar. *The Many Worlds of Sarala Devi: A Diary & The Tagores and Sartorial Styles: A Photo Essay*. New Delhi, Social Science Press, 2010.

Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore, and Sukumar Ray, editors. *Sandesh*, year 3. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 2015.

Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore, editor. *Sandesh*, year 1. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 1415 BS.

---. *Sandesh*, year 2. Collected and Reprinted. Kolkata, Parul, 2018.

Raychaudhuri, Upendrakishore. "Bhramankarir Patra." *Sathi*, year 1, part I, issue 11, Falgun, 1300 BS, 1893, pp. 224–26.

---. "Darjeeling Prabasir Patra." *Sakha*, part 9, August 1891, pp. 115–16.

---. "Megher Muluk." *Sandesh*, year 1, vol. 1, 1321 BS, 1914. Issues Asharh (70–74), Shraban (106–109), and Bhadra (143–145).

---. "Puri." *Mukul*, year 11, issue 3, Asharh 1312 (May–June, 1905). Reprint in *Upendrakishor Samagra*, edited by Sunil Jana. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2004, pp. 843–65.

---. *Essays on Half-Tone Photography*. Facsimile Edition. Kolkata, Jadavpur University Press, 2014.

Reynolds, Kimberley. "Perceptions of Childhood." British Library Website, 2014. <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/perceptions-of-childhood>

---. *Children's Literature: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Reynolds, Kimberley. *Children's Literature: From the fin de siècle to the new millennium*. 2<sup>nd</sup>, ed., Devon, Northcote, 2012.

Richards, Jeffrey, editor. *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*. Manchester University Press, 1989.

Rit, Pratyush Kumar, editor. *Sarala Devi-r Bhramankatha*. Kolkata, Lok Seva Shibir, 2021.

---. *Thakurbarir Vramankatha*. Kolkata, Patralekha, 2012.

Rohtagi, Pauline, and Pheroza Godrej, editors. *Under the Indian Sun: British Landscape Artists*. Bombay, MARG Publications, 1995.

Roy, Gautam Chando. "Upendrakishore Roychaudhuri's 'Sandesh': An Exploratory Essay on Children's Literature and the Shaping of Juvenile Mind in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Bengal." Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, vol. 73, 2012, pp. 898–905. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44156287>.

- Roy, Swarup, translator. *The Observant Owl: Hootum's Vignettes of Nineteenth-Century Calcutta*. Ranikhet, Black Kite, 2008.
- Sacareau, Isabella. "Himalayan hill stations from the British Raj to Indian tourism." *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research*, vol. 31, spring2007, pp. 30–45.
- Saha, Nilay Kumar. *Bangla Panjikaye Purono Kolkata*. Kolkata, Setu, 2022.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism: Western Concepts of the Orient*. Penguin, 2001.
- . *Culture and Imperialism*. London, Vintage, 1994.
- Sakhawat Hossain, Rokeya. "Kupomanduker Himalay Darshan." *Agranthita Rokeya*, edited by Abhijit Sen. Kolkata, Naya Udyog, 1998, pp. 17–21.
- Sampan*. Special Issue on Travel Writing. Year 12, vol. 7, no. 1 & 2, January 2022.
- Sangari, Kumkum, and Sudesh Vaid, editors. *Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History*. Rutgers University Press, 1990.
- Santa Debi. *Bharat-Muktisadhak Ramananda Chattopadhyaya O Ordhasatabdir Bangla*. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2005.
- Sanyal, Rambrahma. "Kanpur." *Mukul*, part III, issue 10, Magh, 1304 BS. Reprint in *Sab Sera Mukul*, edited by Asitabha Das. Kolkata, Sadharan Brahma Samaj, 2018, pp. 250–52.
- Sar, Ramen Kumar. *Rail: Unish Shataker Bangali Jiban o Sahitye*. Kolkata, Kamalini, 2012.
- Saraswathi, T. S., Shailaja Menon, and Ankur Madan. *Childhoods in India: Traditions, Trends and Transformations*. Routledge, 2018.
- Sarbadhikari, Jadunath. *Tirtha Bhraman*, edited by Nagendranath Basu. Reprint. Kolkata, Ashadeep, 2014.
- Sarkar, Abhishek. "Reading Byron in Nineteenth Century Bengal." *The Byron Journal*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2018, pp. 49–61. <https://doi.org/10.3828/bj.2018.7>.
- . Introduction to *Darjeeling Prabasisr Patra* by Tarapada Bandyopadhyay. Reprint. Edited by Abhishek Sarkar. Kolkata, Parchment, 2018, pp. 9–24.
- Sarkar, Binaybhusan. "Mata o Santan Shikhsa." *Mahila*. Ashwin–Kartik, 1320 BS (1913). *Samayiki*, edited by Pradip Basu. Kolkata, Ananda Publishers, 2009, pp. 759–66.

- Sarkar, Jogindranath. *Khukumonir Chhora*. Kolkata, National Book Agency, 2006.
- Sarkar, Mahua. "Difference in Memory." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 48, no. 1, 2006, pp. 139–68.
- Sarkar, Shinjini. "Hans Andersen o Unish Shataker Bangla Onubaad." Proceedings of the Inter-University research Scholars' Conference. Department of Bengali, Jadavpur University, 2019, pp. 95–97.
- Sarkar, Smritikumar. *Technology and Rural Change in Eastern India 1830–1980*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Sarkar, Sumit. *Modern Times: India 1880s–1950s Environment, Economy, Culture*. Ranikhet, Permanent Black, 2015.
- . *Kaliyuga, Chakri, Bhakti: Ramkrishna o Tnar Samaya*. Bakhrahat, South 24 Parganas, Seriban, 2006.
- . *Modern Times: India 1880s–1950s Environment, Economy, Culture*. Ranikhet, Permanent Black, 2014.
- Sarkar, Tanika. *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion, and Cultural Nationalism*. New Delhi, Permanent Black, 2001.
- Sarala Debi. *Jibaner Jharapata*. Kolkata, Subarnarekha, 2007.
- Satow, Michael, and Ray Desmond, editors, *Railways of the Raj*. London, Scholar Press, 1980.
- Scharfe, Hartmut. *Education in Ancient India*. Leiden, Brill, 2002.
- Schivelbusch, Wolfgang. *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19<sup>th</sup> century*. University of California Press, 1986.
- Scott, Mary-Augusta, editor. *The Essays of Francis Bacon*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908.
- Second Geography*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Calcutta School Book Society, 1857.
- Sen, Abhijit, and Ujjal Ray, editors. *Pather Katha: Shatabdir Shandhikshane Bangamahilar Bhraman*. Kolkata, Stree, 1999.
- Sen, Bijayram. *Tirthamangalkabya*, edited by Nagendranath Basu. Reprint. Kolkata, Parashpathar, 2009.

Sen, Jaladhar. "Delhi." *Sakha o Sathi*, vol. 1, part I, issue 12, Chaitra, 1301 BS, pp. 218–22 and vol. 3, issue 12/13, Falgun and Chaitra, 1303 BS, pp. 210–14.

Sen, Jaladhar. *Himalay*. Reprint. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 2019.

Sen, Nabendu. *Bangla Shishu Sahitya: Tothyo, Tatwarup o Bisleshan*. Kolkata, Puthipatra, 2000.

Sen, Nivedita. *Family, School and Nation: The Child and Literary Constructions in 20th-Century Bengal*. Routledge, 2015.

Sen, Pramada Charan. "Parasnath." *Sakha* part III, issue 2, February 1885, pp. 22–24.

---. "Rail er Gari." part I, issue 4, April 1883, pp. 57–59.

Sen, Satadru. "A Juvenile Periphery: The Geographies of Literary Childhood in Colonial Bengal." *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, vol. 5, no. 1, spring 2004, pp. N.A. <https://doi.org/10.1353/cch.2004.0039>

---. *Colonial Childhoods: The Juvenile Periphery of India, 1850–1945*. London, Anthem, 2005.

Sen, Satish Chandra. Editorial. *Sathi*, year 1, issue 1, Baishakh, 1300 BS, p. 20.

Sen, Simonti. "Emergence of Secular Travel in Bengali Cultural Universe: Some Passing Thoughts." *Indian Travel Narratives: New Perspectives*, edited by Somdatta Mandal. New Delhi, Pencraft International, 2021, pp. 34–49.

---. *Travels to Europe: Self and other in Bengali Travel Narratives, 1870–1910*. Hyderabad, Orient Longman, 2005.

Sen, Snehalata. "Mussoorie." *Sakha o Sathi*, part 1, issue 11, Falgun, 1301 BS, 1894, pp. 214–16.

Sen, Suchismita. "Tagore's 'Lokashahitya': The Oral Tradition in Bengali Children's Rhymes." *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. 55, no. 1, 1996, pp. 1–47.

Sen, Sukumar, editor. *Chandimangalkabya*. New Delhi, Sahitya Akademi, 1362 BS.

Sengoopta, Chandak. *The Rays Before Satyajit: Creativity and Modernity in Colonial India*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

Senior, Olive. "Should Literature be Political?" Keynote Address. The NGC Bocas Lit Fest, Trinidad, 2013. <http://www.edinburghworldwritersconference.org/should-literature-be-political/olive-senior-should-literature-be-political/>

- Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Reprint. London, The Arden Shakespeare, 2001.
- Shanta Debi and Sita Debi. *Hindustani Upakatha*. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1989.
- Shanta Debi. *Purbasmriti*. Kolkata, Thema, 2014.
- Sharma, Jayeeta. "Making Gardens, Erasing Jungles: The Tea Enterprise in Colonial Assam." *The British Empire and the Natural World: Environmental Encounters in South Asia*, edited by Deepak Verma, Vinita Damodaran, and Rohan D'Souza. Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 119–41.
- Shastri, Shibnath. *Atmasharita*. Kolkata, Bishwabani, 1983.
- . "Elephanta Giri Mandir." *Sakha*, part V, issue 5, May 1887, pp. 75–77.
- Sikdar Datta, Nilanjana. "Bengali Hindu pilgrims and travellers to the Himalayas from the late 19th to the late 20th century." *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, themed issue on "India and Travel Narratives", vol. 12, no. 3, 2020, pp. 49–59.
- Singh, Upinder. *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India: From the Stone Age to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century*. Pearson, 2008.
- . *The Idea of Ancient India: Essays on Religion, Politics, and Archaeology*. Sage Publications, 2016.
- Sinha, Kaliprasanna. *Hutom Pyanchar Naksha*, edited by Arun Nag. Kolkata, Subarnarekha, 1398 BS.
- Sinha, Mrinalini. *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Manchester University Press, 1995.
- Sinha, Rajyeshwar. "Apan Hote Bahire: Atmaparichayer Khnoj o Musalman Bangalir Duti Bhraman Akhyan." *Sampan*, vol. 7, no. 1 & 2, January 2022, pp. 532–45.
- . "Bangalir Bhraman, Bhramankahini ebong Tirthabhraman Bishoyok Ekti Prostab." *Anushtup*, vol. 40, pre-Sharadiya, 2012, pp. 277–310.
- Sircar, Sanjay. "An Annotated 'Chhara-Punthi': Nursery Rhymes from Bengal." *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. 56, no. 1, 1997, pp. 79–108.
- Sita Debi. *Niret Gurur Kahini O Onyanyo Golpo*. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1989.
- Smith, Michelle. J. *Empire in British Girls' Literature and Culture: Imperial Girls, 1880–1915*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Soudamini Debi. "Pitri Smriti." *Smritikatha*, edited by Somendranath Basu. Kolkata, Baitanik, 1409 BS.

Stephens, John. "Retelling Stories across Time and Cultures." *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature*, edited by M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel. Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 91–107.

Suleri, Sara. *The Rhetoric of English India*. University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Tagore, Abanindranath. "Chhele Bhulano Chhora." *Agranthito Abanindranath*, edited by Parthajit Gangopadhyay. Kolkata, Patralekha, 2011, pp. 46–71.

---. "Shishu Sahitya." *Agranthito Abanindranath*, edited by Parthajit Gangopadhyay. Kolkata, Patralekha, 2011, pp. 44–45.

Tagore, Debendranath. *Atmajibani*, edited by Satish Chandra Chakrabarti. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1960.

Tagore, Jyotirindranath. "Barishaler Patro." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 4, Shraban 1292 BS, 1885. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2010, pp. 159–65.

---. "Barishaler Patro." *Prabandha Manjari*. Calcutta, Sanyal and Co., 1312 BS, 1905, pp. 469–79.

---. *Vramankatha*, edited by Pratyush Kumar Rit. Kolkata, Kamalini, 2011.

Tagore, Rabindranath. "Biggno." *Shishu*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1404 BS, pp. 50–51.

---. "Chhele Bholano Chhora- 1." *Rabindra Rachanabali*, v XV. 150 Year Commemoration Edition. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 2016, pp. 173–98.

---. "Chhele Bholano Chhora- 2." *Rabindra Rachanabali*, v XV. 150 Year Commemoration Edition. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 2016, pp. 198–218.

---. "Dosh Diner Chhuti." *Balak*, year 1, part I, issue 3, Ashar 1292 BS, 1885. Reprint. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2010, pp. 106–111.

Tagore, Rabindranath. "Duranta Asha."  
[http://bichitra.jdvu.ac.in/search/bengali\\_search.php](http://bichitra.jdvu.ac.in/search/bengali_search.php)

---. "Jagat Parabarar Teere." *Shishu*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1404 BS, pp. 9–11.

---. "On the Seashore." <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/45670/on-the-seashore>.

- . “Pakhir Palak.” *Shishu*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1404 BS, pp. 141–43.
- . “Swadesh.” *Rabindra Rachanaboli*, vol. 14, *Essays*. 150 year Commemoration Edition. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 2016, p. 123.
- . “Chhele Bholano Chhora.” *Rabindra Rachanabali*, vol. xv. 150 Year Commemoration ed. Kolkata, Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, 2016, pp. 173–98.
- . *A Visit to Japan*. Translated by Shakuntala Rao Sastri. 1<sup>st</sup> ed., East West Institute, 1961.
- . *Chhelebela*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1347 BS.
- . *Chhinnapatrabali*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1992.
- . *Glimpses of Bengal*. Macmillan, 1921.
- . Introduction. *Rajarshi*. *Rabindra Rachanabali* vol. I. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1393 BS.
- . Introduction. *Thhakurmar Jhuli*, by Dakhsinaranjan Mitra Majumdar. Reprint. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1980, pp. 9–12.
- . *Jiban Smriti*. *Rabindra Rachanabali*, vol. 9. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1396 BS, pp. 409–514.
- . *Letters from a Sojourner in Europe*. Translated by Manjari Chakravarti and edited by Supriya Roy. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 2008.
- . *Letters from a Young Poet: 1887–1895*. Translated by Rosinka Chaudhuri. Penguin, 2014.
- . *Letters from Russia*. Translated by Sasadhar Sinha. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1961.
- . Review of *Kankabati*. Reprinted in Preface to *Kankabati*. Kolkata, Mitra o Ghosh, 1364 BS. First published in *Sadhana*, year 2, part I, Falgun, 1299 BS.
- . *Shishu*. Kolkata, Visva Bharati, 1404 BS.
- Takeda, Hariprobha. *Bangomahilar Japan Jatra o Onnanno Rachona*. Reprint. Edited by Manjushree Sinha. Kolkata, D. M. Library, 2009.
- Teltscher, Kate. “India/Calcutta: city of palaces and dreadful night.” *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing*, edited by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs. Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 191–206.

Thapa, Agasthya. "The Correct View: Ethnographic Representation of Darjeeling Hill Tribes, from Drawings to Photography." *Mapping India: Transitions and Transformations, 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> Century*, edited by Sutapa Dutta and Nilanjana Mukherjee. Routledge, 2020, pp. 56–76.

Thapar, Romila. *Time as a Metaphor of History: Early India*. Oxford University Press, 1996.

*The Hindu Sea Voyage Movement in Bengal*. Published by the Standing Committee on the Hindu Sea Voyage Question, 1894.

*The Tour of Doctor Syntax: In Search of the Picturesque*. Seventh Edition. London, Methuen, 1903.

Thompson, Carl. "The Picturesque at Home and Abroad."  
<https://www.bl.uk/picturing-places/articles/the-picturesque-at-home-and-abroad>.

---. *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

---. *Travel Writing: The New Idiom*. Routledge, 2011.

Tickell, Alex. "Negotiating the Landscape: Travel, Transaction, and the Mapping of Colonial India." *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 34, Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing, 2004: 18–30. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3509481>

Tillotson, G. H. R. 1992. 'The Indian Travels of William Hodges'. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 377–98. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/25182573](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25182573).

---. *The Artificial Empire: The Indian Landscapes of William Hodges*. Richmond, Surrey, Curzon, 2000.

---. Introduction. *New Found Lands: The Indian Landscapes from Empire to Freedom*. New Delhi, Delhi Art Gallery, 2021.

Trivedi, Ramendrasundar. 2006. Introduction. *Khukumonir Chhora*, by Jogindranath Sarkar. Kolkata, National Book Agency, n. p.

Twain, Mark. *Following the Equator*. Hartford, 1897.

Uma Debi. *Babar Katha*, edited by Arun Dey. Kolkata, Dey's Publishing, 2010.

Verma, Nitin. "Coolie Acts and Acting Coolies: Coolie, Planter and State in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Colonial Tea Plantations of Assam." *Social Scientist*, vol. 33, no. 5 & 6, May–June 2005, pp. 49–72.

Verma, Nitin. *Coolies of Capitalism: Assam Tea and the Making of Coolie Labour*. Berlin, Boston, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2017.

Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and the British Rule in India*. Oxford University Press, 1989.

Wakefield, Priscilla. *A Family Tour through the British Empire*. 14<sup>th</sup> ed., London, Darton and Harvey, 1835.

Wall, Cynthia. *Grammars of Approach: Landscape, Narrative, and the Linguistic Picturesque*. University of Chicago Press, 2019.

Wharton, W. J. L. Preface. *Captain Cook's Journal*. London, 1893.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford University Press, 1973.

Windamere Hotel. "Memories of the British Raj."  
<https://www.windamerehotel.com/memories-of-the-british-raj>

Wood, H. Arden. *A Short Geography of Bengal*. London and Bombay, George Bell and Sons, 1895.

Woodring, Carl. "What Coleridge Thought of Pictures." *Images of Romanticism: Verbal and Visual Affinities*, edited by Karl Kroeber and William Walling. Yale University Press, 1978. 91–106.

Wordsworth, William. "My Heart Leaps Up." *Poems Vol. I*. London, Longman Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, 1807, p. 44.

Youngs, Tim, editor. *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces*. London, Anthem, 2006.

---. Introduction. *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces*, edited by Tim Youngs. London, Anthem, 2006, pp. 1–18.