sal? Dwelling upon this trajectory of normativity or universal validity of judgement in Kant's work as reflected in various pieces of marginalia, Clewis discovers two strands of thought or positions as held by Kant. The early notes from 1760s to 1787 indicate that Kant believed in some kind of empiricism. Taste, in this viewpoint, was also a more or less rationalist conception. Clewis quotes relevant excerpts from Kant and discusses the same with the help of Hume's (among others') influence on Kant. He takes the reader in and out of the work of different philosophers while blending his observations with their words:

> . . . Hume recognizes that critics – even if they are well practiced, unbiased, and equipped with delicacy and strong sense – are bound to differ with each other. People may even disagree with their past selves. "At twenty, Ovid may be the favourite author; Horace at forty; and perhaps Tacitus at fifty." The contingences of temperament and personality, personal experience, age, and culture will be reflected in a divergence of aesthetic judgments. (28)

The observation is that taste changes and Clewis tunes into Lord Kames, Baumgarten and Wolff, in addition to Burke and Hume, to discuss art criticism in terms of taste. But he also turns to Kant's notes to argue that Kant synthesised the views of these British and German thinkers to arrive at his own unique position, that of 'sensible comprehension': the idea that the beautiful facilitates sensible comprehension according to the laws of intuitive cognition or sensibility. In the process of explaining this theme within Kant's thought on normativity of judgement, Clewis puts together quotes from dozens of sources. While one may not necessarily grasp where every source informing Kant's views intersects with the others and with Kant, reading it all for all the themes Clewis chooses as his schema is a worthy exercise.

As Clewis articulates it very explicitly, the intense handling and attempt at reconstruction of how Kant arrived at his thoughts – or rather oscillated between extreme positions – has a very clear threefold agenda. One is that Kant should be seen as 'full of inner tensions' thanks to the fact that he borrowed from various sources. Two, the *Third Critique* – a text that most scholars of aesthetics turn to for ideas and first principles in general – should not be seen as the gospel truth; indeed, reading it in the light of the marginalia, as Clewis does, might turn out to be a far more fulfilling exercise. And three, these complexities of influence and shifts or binaries in Kant's thought must alert scholars to the fact that Kant cannot be assumed to have a fixed position and applied unthinkingly to critique.

Thus, Clewis's monograph needs to be read for its innovative practice of turning a work of art theory into a text in itself that needs to be supplemented with a number of other sources rather than being taken for granted. More importantly, in the way it puts together the various voices from British and German traditions, it is a work of comparative aesthetics in itself.

SONI WADHWA
SRM University, Andhra Pradesh,

THE WORLD IN WORDS: TRAVEL WRITING AND THE GLOBAL IMAGINATION IN MUSLIM SOUTH ASIA. By Daniel Joseph Majchrowicz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. 284 pp.

The book *The World in Words* takes its readers on a fascinating expedition, by examining the importance of travel writing in Muslim South Asia through a historical analysis lens. Daniel Majchrowicz, probes the genre of Urdu travel writing during the time period of 1840 to 1990, providing facts about the past and an ongoing historical documentation of how Urdu speakers communicated with the world. The author begins his work by talking about the emergence of Urdu

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travelogues in mid-nineteenth-century India, which occurred at the same time as increased mobility, expanding literacy, and the accessibility of inexpensive print. The travelogue developed as a way for Indians to convey their stories and spread their global imaginations as they travelled and dispersed throughout the world. These travelogues lauded travel and its advantages while underscoring global transformations.

The book addresses overlooked social history and raises issues relating to language, gender, class, power, and race in precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial South Asia by viewing the travelogue as a work with literary ambition and global relevance. The terms "travel is hell" and "travel is a means to success" are two schools of thought that are representative of the book's contradictory attitudes towards travel in the earlier perspective. As pointed out by one of the advisors in the fictive King Dabashim's court who warns about the perils of travel:

> You have not borne the toils of travel, nor seen the struggle of being far from home, nor has your soul yet heard the phrase "being far from home is anguish." Travel is a tree that gives no fruit except that of separation, and being away from home is a cloud which gives naught but the rain of abjection.

The author then goes into depth on how travel literature developed into a popular genre in colonial India, highlighting three crucial events that contributed to this growth. The first was the creation of cutting-edge technology like railroads and steamships that made travel more feasible. The second was the development of new print technologies that made it simpler to produce texts and the liberalisation of colonial press ownership regulations, which allowed almost anybody to become a publisher. The third was the profound changes colonization brought about in social and intellectual life.

Even though most Indians were introduced to the wider world through colonial discourse, they ultimately dictated the terms of their engagement. Colonial sources offered one possible view of the world, but Indians also created their own views. A major conceptual shift during this period was the unambiguous celebration of travel, with authors often associating it with moral and social improvement. Travel was now seen as a source of "countless blessings" that was increasingly accessible to ordinary people, both as travellers and readers.

The World in Words provides a fascinating account of the political and cultural context in which travelogues were produced and their strategic importance for projecting symbolic power and legitimacy. The author analysed several travelogues, including *Bagh* by Karim 'Ali and *Kitab-i Faizyab Ma'ab* by Ghaus Muhammad Khan, highlighting their innovative use of the press and the Urdu language. They show how travelogues were used to promote global imaginations and balance relations with other kingdoms and the British.

The book provides attention to the diversity of experiences and perspectives among travellers and authors. Majchrowicz gives voice to a range of perspectives, including those of women travellers, lower-caste Hindus, and Muslims of various social and economic backgrounds. By exploring the experiences of often-overlooked groups, the author provides a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of travel and writing in those times.

The author provides a glimpse into the lives of Muslim women in India and their encounters with travel, featuring their role in envisioning a pan-regional Islamic community through their first-person narrative accounts of their travels to the Middle East countries. The book examines Muslim global connections and networks, demonstrating how the power of travel can connect people across cultures and boundaries and inspire a sense of belonging to a larger community. The book discusses the emotional and affective nature of Urdu travel writing about the Middle East, which played a critical role in creating an imagination of a united Muslim community in Urdu literature. However, this connection was fraught and unequal, with Urdu travellers imagining their connections to certain Muslims but not others, shaping a critical chapter in South Asian history.

One of the key strengths of the book is its focus on the specific social, cultural, and religious contexts that shaped travel and writing in this period. Majchrowicz explores how social norms and religious strictures affected travel, particularly for upper-class Muslim women, and how social re-

formers advocated for special travel arrangements to address these restrictions. The author also examines how the popularity of Urdu as a written language contributed to the emergence of new global imaginaries in respect of women as authors were able to reach broader audiences through their writing.

The book provides an interesting perspective on the experiences of two Muslim women travellers from India, Nawab Sikandar Begum and Begum Sarbuland Jang. However, it also raises important questions about the role of racism in shaping their experiences. Firstly, Nawab Sikandar Begum's lack of affinity for Arabs and dislike of the people she encountered raise questions about the influence of racism on her perceptions. On the other hand, Begum Sarbuland Jang's positive experiences and focus on building relationships with women from the Ottoman world suggest a rejection of racism and an embrace of solidarity among Muslim women.

However, *The World in Words* also digs into the limitations of Muslim sisterhood in respect of women's travel writing, by pointing out the barrings made in the global imagination of the Muslim world. While the writers were more friendly and inclined towards Ottomans and Levantines, they cut out African Muslim women, ultimately highlighting the limitations of Muslim sisterhood, which extended only to light-skinned Muslims.

Further research should be made to determine how racism has affected Muslim women travel writers in the past and how it is influencing them right now. Additionally, it might look at the bigotry that Muslim women have faced both inside and outside of their own societies. The shift in attitudes towards the Muslim world and the emergence of a sense of sisterhood among Muslim women are important areas for future research.

SIKANDER KHAN
COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus, Pakistan

Travel writing has always captivated readers because it takes them to new and exciting locations and introduces them to new cultural practices and experiences. Daniel Majchrowicz's *The World in Words: Travel Writing and the Global Imagination in Muslim South Asia* explores the rich legacy of travel writing in Muslim South Asia and its impact on global understanding and imagination.

It examines travel writing in Muslim South Asia from the nineteenth century to the present by the renowned South Asian literary scholar Majchrowicz. The book is divided into colonial, postcolonial, and contemporary sections, each devoted to a distinct era. Each chapter focuses on a different group of renowned travel writers and examines how global political, economic, and social challenges influenced their topics, methods, and motivations, as well as provided insight into various social issues of the period being discussed.

The book's introduction provides a firm groundwork for understanding the evolution of travel writing in Muslim South Asia. The development of trade networks, the influence of Persian and Arabic literary traditions, and the spread of Islam are just a few of the many topics that Majchrowicz discusses as influences on the genre (pp. 23–24). The author explains how travel writing contributed to the formation of regional, cultural and political identities, highlighting how such works engaged with notions of nation, religion, and cosmopolitanism (pp. 45–48).

The first section of Majchrowicz's book is devoted to an analysis of travel writing from the colonial period, when the British Empire exerted significant influence over the Indian subcontinent. He mentions authors such as Mirza Abu Talib Khan, whose *Masir Talibi* is a travelogue of his time in Britain and Europe, and Syed Ahmad Khan, whose *Asar-us-Sanadid* is a detailed account of the historical sites in Delhi. The author emphasizes how these authors influenced the global imagination of their period through their unique perspectives on the colonized and the colonizers. In addition, he discusses the authors' objectives, which include fostering greater understanding between the East and West, giving Muslim South Asia greater recognition, and aspiring to elevate their stature on the international stage.

The second section investigates the postcolonial era, which witnessed the emergence of new nation-states and the establishment of a malleable international system. Majchrowicz introduces his readers to authors such as Saadat Hasan Manto (p. 120), whose "Letters to Uncle Sam" provided a comical view of the postcolonial world, and Ismat Chughtai (p. 130), whose writings described her travels to the Soviet Union in the 1950s. In a similar manner, the author examines Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's interaction with European knowledge and culture through his travel writings (pp. 101–104). The author places a particular emphasis on the ability of these writers to represent the socio-political events that were taking place in the newly independent republics of the region, as well as the role that these authors played in resisting the colonial narratives that had previously dominated travel writing in South Asia.

In the final section, Majchrowicz discusses the implications of travel writing for comprehending the global imagination in Muslim South Asia. The author argues that these works demonstrate a complex and nuanced engagement with the world that defies simple classification as "East" or "West" (pp. 197–199). Instead, the book contends that travel writing in Muslim South Asia should be viewed as contributing to a broader dialogue about identity, belonging, and the region's global standing.

Furthermore, Majchrowicz shifts his focus to modern travel writing, highlighting the works of authors such as Amitav Ghosh (p. 189), whose "In an Antique Land" explores the connections between India, Egypt, and the medieval Mediterranean world, and Kamila Shamsie (p. 211), whose "Burnt Shadows" weaves the stories of different generations across continents. The author emphasizes the ways in which contemporary travel writers combine genres, techniques, and topics to create new and engaging narratives, both in accordance with and in contrast to the traditions of travel writing.

Majchrowicz's knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject matter shine through in the book's thorough research and perceptive analysis. Using the manuscripts themselves as well as letters, diaries, and newspaper pieces, he brings to life the diverse fabric of Muslim South Asian travel writing. A more complete and nuanced understanding of the genre and its evolution over time is achieved through the author's inclusion of lesser-known writers alongside more renowned individuals.

Moreover, the author's examination of the connection between travel writing and the global imagination is one of the most intriguing aspects of the book. According to Majchrowicz, these works do more than simply chronicle the authors' lives; they also alter the readers' perspectives and encourage them to view the world in a more human and interconnected manner. The author cites "In an Antique Country" by Ghosh as an example of a work that challenges Eurocentric historiographies by demonstrating the interconnection of South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa (p. 195). In a similar vein, he describes how Chughtai's Soviet travelogue offered South Asian readers during the Cold War a unique perspective on socialism and internationalism (p. 131).

The book is further enriched by the inclusion of numerous excerpts from the travel writings under discussion, allowing readers to interact with the texts and obtain a deeper understanding of their literary and historical significance. In-depth analyses of these excerpts by Majchrowicz provide a nuanced understanding of the authors' intentions, writing styles, subjects, and the larger cultural, political, and historical contexts in which they were written.

Despite the academic rigor of the book, it is a pleasure to read owing to the author's clear style and engaging narrative. The expertise with which he combines literary criticism, historical context, and biographical information creates a captivating and engaging reading experience.

The author's occasional emphasis on the global imagination takes precedence over his investigation of local and regional aspects of the travel writings; this is the only minor flaw in the book. However, this does not significantly diminish the overall quality or significance of the work.

To sum up, Majchrowicz's book is a groundbreaking and insightful exploration of a rich and undervalued literary heritage. This work is an important contribution to South Asian literature, travel writing, and global studies, primarily as a result of the author's exhaustive research, insightful analysis, and captivating narrative.

In addition, it remains a significant contribution to the study of Muslim South Asian travel writings. This book offers new insights into the cultural, political, and intellectual currents of the region by shedding light on a rich and varied body of writing that has been largely neglected by scholars. The author's emphasis on the global imagination and the role it played in the development of identities in Muslim South Asia provides an intriguingly new perspective on travel writing.

Furthermore, readers are encouraged to reconsider their preconceived conceptions of South Asia, its people, and their place in the global imagination as the book illuminates the diverse voices and perspectives of Muslim South Asian travel writers. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the connections between travel, literature, and world history, and it serves as a timely and essential reminder of the power of writing to transcend borders, foster understanding, and unite civilizations.

ASHIR KHAN
COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus, Pakistan