

along with other units, help a discerning reader identify questions and different positions from which these are responded to not just in philosophy but also in daily “practical” life.

Like Immanuel Kant’s vision or view of human enlightenment as that which ushers human race into maturity (the state in which one thinks for oneself rather than depend on others for opinions or views), introduction volumes such as Bailey’s are tools that one must keep revisiting. These are compasses to the classics that students and scholars will always need to keep coming back to the first principles. One can never have enough of these.

SONI WADHWA
SRM University, Andhra Pradesh, India

LITERARY JOURNEYS: MAPPING FICTIONAL TRAVELS ACROSS THE WORLD OF LITERATURE. By John McMurtrie (Ed.). Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2024. 256 pp.

World literature is of interest to scholars as an area concerned with translation, power, comparative aesthetics, and so on. However, it also finds great enthusiasm outside academia as manifested in curiosity around great and interesting books from authors and cultures far and wide. It is not very often that books appealing to both the scholarly and the non-academic groups emerge to celebrate diversity in world literatures. John McMurtrie’s edited volume is one of such rare books. It has short, informative essays on works of fiction in which a journey is explicitly mentioned and undertaken by character(s) not just in the sense of spatial journeys (into “real” rather than imaginary places) but also in the sense of spiritual ones.

The individual essays are contributed by authors, scholars, poets, curators, critics, and so on. To quote from the editor:

This volume’s discriminating selection was driven by three main criteria: firstly, the work had to be a literary work of fiction, so explicitly nonfiction travel writing was excluded; second, each book should contain a journey that is evidentially based on real, rather than imaginary, locations even if those places are not explicitly mentioned. For this reason, *The Pilgrim’s Progress* is included whereas Dante’s *Inferno* is not. Third, the aim was for the book to act both as a travel companion to different corners of the globe, and additionally as a time machine with the entries running chronologically. (10)

Beginning with Homer’s *The Odyssey* (8th century BCE) and concluding with Amor Twoles’s *The Lincoln Highway* (2021), the book profiles seventy eight travel books organised under four headings: Quests & Explorations (upto 1897), The Age of Travel (1898–1953), Postmodern Movements (1954–1999), and Contemporary Crossings (2000–present). The essays are richly complemented by illustrations drawn from paintings and other forms of visual culture for their depictions of the authors’ conceptions of spaces and journeys.

The book also closely ties with the idea of travel in the world and travel within a book through the act of reading. At one level, *Literary Journeys* is a ready reference for works on the theme containing basic facts about the text, the author, the time it was written in, and adaptations wherever available. At another level, it is a treasure for bibliophiles who love the form of the book as much as the thought of the book as an idea.

Readers and travellers will want to look up the book to see if their own favourite works of travel, journey, or adventure have made it to this curation. Some will inevitably be saddened to see that not many works from the Global South can be found in it. For instance, Bengali author Bibhutibhusan Bandopadhyay’s *Chander Pahar* [The Mountain of the Moon] (1937), a novel about a young man’s

adventures in the forests of Africa is not in the list. However, that should not necessarily be seen as a limitation of McMurtrie's imagination or resourcefulness because this book deserves to be built upon with more books: the point of a curation is to highlight its subjectivity and also to inspire more attempts at curation.

One must read *Literary Journeys* for all kinds of reasons, innocent and wise. One of these is to spot the most interesting journey. Another is to broaden one's understanding of quests and cultural investments into meanings of quests and journeys. For instance, 17th century Japanese poet Matsuo Basho's journey into northern provinces of the region covers a whopping 1500 miles in 156 days and is an example of all kinds of hardships. On the other hand, the more well-known *Robinson Crusoe's* journey is a journey into spiritual and moral identity in which the impulse to travel is referred to as the original sin. In the process of reading, fine details emerge about journeys in texts, especially around the texts that one has read. For instance, *Robinson Crusoe* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* don't necessarily come to mind as texts of journey but they are. Wordsworth's *The Prelude* is known as a work of Romantic poetry but it is also about growth, beauty, and personhood.

Thus, a third reason to read *Literary Journeys* is to discover new texts or refresh one's memory of the texts already read. Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick; or The Whale* (1851) has the eponymous character hyphenated in the title but not in the book! And that its first edition didn't have the epilogue. Its title was, simply, *The Whale*. Another example is Defoe's novel. As mentioned earlier, *Robinson Crusoe* comes to mind as the story of a character living alone on an island but that part is preceded and followed by journeys to and from the island. Similarly, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) is another:

A reader new to the text may be surprised that significant journeys are the heart of the story. Characters, compelled by the need to escape slavery or in an effort to find a new life away from it, sojourn to Canada, to Louisiana, and eventually "back to Africa," reminding us that American slavery involved global travel, whether forced or voluntary. (66)

But most importantly, one must read it to germinate more archives of world literature organised on the lines of themes or form: Bildungsroman, women's journeys, children's journeys from innocence to experience, South-South journeys, journeys from South to North, or even memoirs and non-fiction (as left out in this book).

Literary Journeys is a journey into journeys. It can be read in any order and from any point. This (reading) is not going to be a linear one and will hardly be a continuous one from cover to cover. It is a book that needs to be read in order to be dazzled by trivia around books.

SONI WADHWA
SRM University, Andhra Pradesh, India

COLONIALISM, WORLD LITERATURE AND THE MODERN CULTURE OF LETTERS.
By Baidik Bhattacharya, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. 302 pp.

Reading literature helps individuals gain a deeper understanding of their own experiences and how these are shaped by history and the current context. Engaging with and interpreting literature provides insights into how societies and cultures challenge common beliefs, while also fostering creativity and imagination. In this book, the author argues that literature as a distinct mode of language, does not exclusively belong to any single culture or historical context. Rather, it encompasses a variety of ideas and practices from diverse cultural realms, shaping its identity through the legacies of violent colonial encounters in the eighteenth century. The remnants of these